

Talks given by Robert Crosbie
UNIVERSAL THEOSOPHY

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“A man is said to be confirmed in spiritual knowledge when he forsaketh every desire which entereth into his heart, and of himself is happy and content in the Self through the

Self. His mind is undisturbed in adversity; he is happy and contented in prosperity, and he is a stranger to anxiety, fear, and anger. Such a man is called a Muni. When in every condition he receives each event, whether favorable or unfavorable, with an equal mind which neither likes nor dislikes, his wisdom is established, and, having met good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one nor is cast down by the other.”

THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGION

To most people the word "religion" signifies something separate from human existence, and presents the idea of preparation for some unknown future existence. Some religions are based upon the knowledge of an individual who laid the foundation for them; others are believed to be the revelations of a Supreme Being at the time of the creation of the world. Each people have a God of its own; so many peoples, so many Supreme Beings corresponding to the mental ideas of the people. And so, with individuals—as the ideas of men differ widely—so many individuals, so many Gods. All these Gods or Supreme Beings are the creations of men, and not facts in themselves. But back of all those ideas does lie a Reality. The very power that resides in man to create images and endow them with virtues which he does not possess points to something greater than the things created. The creatures cannot be greater than the creators. That which in man creates ideas is greater than any idea he may at any time have held or now holds. We have, then, to get back of all ideas to find the true 'true religion.

True religion must give us a basis for thinking, and consequently, a basis for acting; it must give us an understanding of nature, of ourselves and of other beings. Religion is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas or beliefs—binding not only all Men, but also all Beings and all things in the entire Universe, into one grand whole. Just that basis and that bond are presented in the three fundamental propositions of the Secret Doctrine.

Behind everything that exists is the Sustainer of all that exists, of all that ever was, is, or shall be. Nothing exists without It. It is omnipresent, and It is infinite. But if we take that idea and endeavor to

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confine it to the form of any Being whatever, we shall find we have attempted the impossible. We cannot hold the idea of being with that which is omnipresent and infinite. No being can exist outside of Space which itself is, whether there is void or fulness, whether there are planets, gods or men, or none; which itself is not altered in any way by objects occupying it; which is illimitable—without beginning and without end. A Being must exist in Space, and so must be less than Space. We can then call the Highest Power any name we choose—the Supreme, the Self—so long as we do not limit It, or give It attributes. We may not say It is pleased, nor angry, nor rewards, nor punishes; doing so,

we limit It. If Space itself cannot be measured or limited, how can we limit the Supreme? The Highest Power cannot be less than Space. Even to name It is to limit It; yet It must be the One Reality, the One Sustainer, the One Cause of all existences, the One Knower, the One Experiencer, in all directions and in everything. This proposition drives us back to the very basis of all thought—the power to think, itself—the power which is in each and every being.

We cannot understand nature, other beings and ourselves, by going outside to any conceivable being. The growth of knowledge must be within the perceiver, the thinker himself. All his observation and experience bring him knowledge which he relates to himself in connection with others. Each stands in the vast assemblage of beings, seeing them all, understanding what he may of them all, but himself the only one who sees; all the rest are seen. All others are the same as he is in their essential nature; all are endowed with the same qualities, the same perfections and imperfections; all are copies of every other, differing only in the predominance of one or another quality. But the thinker is the Self—the only Self, so far as he is concerned—the One Life, the One Consciousness, the One Power. As action proceeds from that basis, the greater the powers which flow from that spiritual quality, the greater the increase of knowledge.

Knowledge is religion—not a supposed “revelation” from some superior being who created us as inferior beings, but an actual

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knowledge gained through myriads of years and many existences by Those who have expressed them all. Those beings above us on the ladder of evolution, who are greater than any “Gods” we can conceive of, passed through the same trials and the same sufferings which we are undergoing, until they learned to know their innermost nature and to act in accordance with it. They came to know that true religion is a knowledge of one’s own self, and action in accordance. Drawing nearer in themselves to the very Source of their being, they found the source of every other being to be the same—only the knowledge acquired and the use of that knowledge making the differences between all beings. Their knowledge is an absolutely accurate knowledge of the essence of everything in nature, which alone is the foundation of all true religion.

What is it that prevents us from understanding true religion? It is our minds, which we have filled with narrow ideas of life, with small ideas of the nature of humanity and of ourselves. It is our beliefs which constrain us. A belief is always a statement of ignorance. If we believe, we do not know; if we know, there is no occasion for belief. Unless beliefs are tested out in the fires of experience and show themselves true, they are absolutely useless and worse than useless, because they tempt us to use the very powers of our spiritual being in wrong directions which bring suffering and disaster upon ourselves. It is our very spiritual nature which makes our present unhappy condition possible, for

from it flows the One power, either exercising itself through small ideas—its obstacles— or acting fully and without constraint. Each man is his own creator, and each one has to be his own savior through learning right use of the One Power. Those who have learned can only point out to us the Way they learned it; no one can learn for us. We ourselves have to clear away the obstacles that prevent us from knowing our inner selves. We ourselves have to throw aside the hindrances in thinking, in forms of religion, in mental as well as physical idols.

There is one realization which immediately sets our minds in order: it is of That in us which is unchangeable and unchanging. We are that Spirit in very essence; all that has been in our past lives and

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in our present life, all that will in future be, proceeds from the power of that Spirit itself, and is sustained by the power of that Spirit itself. There is nothing apart from us. Nature does not exist separate and apart from us. The laws of nature are but the interrelations and interdependence of all the beings concerned in this stream of evolution. The forces of nature do not exist of themselves. There never was a force of any kind that was not the result of intelligent action. We as spiritual beings are eternally creating forces; for every man's brain and every thought has a dynamic power. Are they lost? No: all the thoughts, all the feelings of all the beings in the universe, provide a store of dynamic energy which constitutes the forces, as we know them, of nature. We draw upon that general reservoir of force in accordance with the ideas held and in accord with our present inward nature. All the time we are adding to the powers of nature for good or for evil. So, too, we are taking from the powers of nature the additions which other beings have put in—the forces which other beings have aroused in nature.

All the powers in the universe are latent in us if we only open the doors to their use. Everyone of us is a little copy of the whole universe. There is not one single element existing anywhere which each one of us does not contain within his own sphere; there is not a power anywhere that cannot be drawn upon. Always the director of that power is the Self within each one. If that Self sees darkly, it is because the mirror into which the Self looks is covered with the dust of false ideas; he sees distorted images. He moves in the directions suggested by the mirror, but it is the Self which supplies the power to move. We would open the door to all powers by a daily and hourly living in accordance with the nature of the Self—seeing that every other being is but an aspect of Self, and acting so that every other being will be helped on its way. For we cannot go on our way alone. We have our duty to fulfill by every other being, whether in the kingdoms below us, without which we could not exist, or in the human kingdom. Every other stands as a vicarious atonement for us—an object lesson—and if we have reached a point higher than that which is ordinarily

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reached by men, then all the more are we constrained to duty by them.

We come to physical existence incarnation after incarnation under the law inherent in our natures, to work with mortal ideas and passions and thoughts; but we who created them, we who sustain them, are immortal. If we were not immortal in our very natures, never by any chance could we become immortal. If we were less than Divinity, then we never could by any possibility understand divinity. Those beings who have been men and who have gone beyond our degrees of illusion—like Jesus of Nazareth, Buddha, and many others—have attained to Their Divinity. They accept the woes of birth to which Their younger brothers are subject, to remind us of our own natures—the only natures over which we have permanent control—that we may become as One of Them, bound to Them as to all nature. To live for others is the foundation and basis of religion—of true spiritual knowledge.

OUR GOD AND OTHER GODS

As a people we speak of “our God,” imagining that we all have the same idea, that we all mean the same thing by the term. Peoples of the past had their meaning of “our God,” and peoples of the present time also say “our God and other Gods,” imagining that their conception is the only true one—all others, untrue, false. The Great War was fought among so-called Christian peoples, who, so far as a consideration of Christianity is concerned, ought to have been worshipping the same God, and guiding thought and action by the precepts ascribed to that God. But is it not true that our theologians and the theologians of those people at war with us addressed petitions to the same “Our God,” in order to bring success to their efforts as against other peoples worshipping the same God? There would then appear to be a multiplicity of Gods, or else something wrong in the conceptions of all of us. If we ask ourselves individually, “What do I mean by the term God?” perhaps we would all say: “The highest there is.” But do we

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mean the highest there is? Do we mean that great power which sustains all beings, all forms, that which by its very nature and by our contemplation of it must appear as infinite, as eternal, as changeless? If we do mean that, then we shall have to amend a great many other ideas which generally connote with the term God. For instance, we shall have to leave the idea of a being entirely outside of our calculations. We have thought that the source and sustainer of all things, all beings, from all time and in all time, is a being; that the something in us which reaches up beyond everything physical, beyond everything thinkable, is outside ourselves. How could that possibly be? How could we possibly prove that this God is a being existing in some far-off heaven unknown to us and separate

from us? How can we imagine a being as omnipresent, and at the same time separate from us or from anything? If Deity is infinite and omnipresent, there is not a grain of sand nor a point of vacant space anywhere where Deity is not. And how again can we give to the idea of Deity, attributes—such as being angry or pleased, rewarding or punishing, since every attribute that we give is a limitation and precludes the idea of omnipresence? No being could be the origin, the sustainer, the source of all that was, is or ever shall be. Any being, however great, is contained and limited in space; no being can be omnipresent.

There is that which is beyond speech, beyond description, and beyond conception—the highest there is in the universe. But are we to look outside in the heavens, in the sea, in the secret places of the earth, in any place whatever; or are we to find it in a much nearer place, that is, within ourselves? For all that anyone can know of God, or the Highest, is what he knows in himself, through himself and by himself. There is no other place of knowledge for us. Yet at the same time we have to perceive that God, or Deity, is not absent from anything, is immanent in the whole, is omnipresent, is at the root and is the seed of every being of every kind anywhere; that there is no thing, not even a grain of sand nor a speck of dust, no point in space, absent from that Source which sustains the whole manifested universe. We can imagine, then, that God, as the ancients put it, “seated in the hearts of all beings;” for there is something in

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the heart of man whence proceeds all feeling, all true life, all true conception. The heart is not the same as the head—a man’s heart may be right and sound and his head wrong. The feeling of the true in the heart is not deceived by this thought or that thought or the other thought; it can only be experienced by each one for himself within himself. God is not an outside God, but is to be sought in the very innermost recesses of our own nature—in the silent chamber, the temple, within us—and nowhere else.

We think that our present civilization far transcends any past civilizations that ever have been; yet there are many records and relics of arts, sciences, of knowledge, of religion, of philosophy such as we have not yet mastered. We are but a young people, as a matter of fact. It is not so many centuries ago since the Founder of the Christian Religion lived upon the earth, and there were many thousands of centuries before that. The people who lived down the course of those centuries knew far more than we. They knew, as we may know, that there is no such thing as creation. No being ever created the earth, or its conditions. This planet, or any other planet, was never created by any being. This solar system and other solar systems were not created by any being. Something produced them. Yes, and it is possible to understand how that production was brought about! By evolution—always an unfolding from within outward—from the very root of every being, from the Deity, the Soul of all, the Spirit of all. Spirit is the root, the sustainer, the energy producing

force for all the evolution that has gone on. Every being in the universe is a product of evolution—all from the same identical root of being, all drawing their powers of expression from the one Source. All are rays from and one with that Absolute Principle, which is our very Self—the Self of all creatures.

What of all those beings who were the Self in process of evolution, who reached a realization of this truth ages and ages before the present civilization? What became of them? Have all their hopes and fears been lost? What is the meaning of those races, those civilizations—was it death for them when their civilization passed out as ours must, since just so surely as it had a beginning so it will have

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an ending? Just so surely as there are those rises and falls in civilizations, so is there a cycle of time through which the conscious man goes, and a cycle of form which the conscious man animates, uses, and leaves—to take another—from civilization to civilization. When, then, we look about us for the results of the civilizations that have been, and try to understand the conditions of the present civilization, we have to see that the people of the world to-day are the very ones who passed through those ancient civilizations, left them, and carried forward whatever of knowledge or of ignorance, of truth or of error, they had gained during those vast periods of time. For LAW rules in everything and every circumstance, everywhere. There is a law of birth—of successive lives on earth, each life the successor and result of the life or lives which preceded. That which sustains man, garners all experience, retains it, carries it forward, and propels evolution, is the One changeless, eternal, immortal Self—the real perceiver, the real knower, the real experiencer in every body, in every form.

The Self is its own law. Each one is the Self, and each—as Self—has produced the conditions under which he finds himself. When the Self acts, it receives the re-action. If it acts not at all, then there is no re-action. Every action brings its re-action from those who are affected by it for good or for evil. For good and evil do not exist of themselves nor in ourselves; they are but effects we feel and classify as good or bad according to our attitude toward them; that which seems 'good to one is "evil" to another. When we have rid ourselves of the idea that there is a God who produced and sustains good, and a devil who produced and sustains evil, we have come to the fact of true perception from within outwards.

Every civilization that has been, and the one in which we now are living, is due to a true or false perception of what our real nature is. If we would ever know and understand our natures, we must first understand that there is in us That which never changes at all, whatever changes are brought about by it. We never are the things we see, or feel, or hear,

or know, or experience. No matter how many the experiences may be, we are still unchanged with the possibility

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of infinite other experiences. That the Self in us is changeless may seem difficult for the Western mind to grasp, thinking that without change there is no progress; but it may be perceived by the fact of our identity remaining ever the same in a child's body and through all the changes of body that have occurred since childhood. If the identity ever changed, it could never observe change. Only that which is permanent and stable can see change, can know it, can make it. And—what theology, modern philosophy, modern science have never taught us—there is this fact: as we are immortal spirit at the very root of our being, we have made for ourselves many mansions all down through the process of nature's changes. The gradual condensation which goes on with every planet and in every solar system goes on with everybody; every form has its initial existence as form in the finest state of matter, from which it is condensed and hardened to the present physical state of matter. But the illimitable experiences of higher planes, back through all those changes, are now resident within ourselves—present with us wherever we are or may be—except as we have shut the doors on them. Why? Because this brain of ours, the most responsive organ in the body, since it is used in our modifications of thought, is concerned with things of the earth, in relation to the body. A brain trained and sustained by this kind of thinking cannot register from the higher nature—from the finer sheaths of the soul. But once we begin to think and act from the basis of these verities, the brain—which is the most rapidly changing organ in the body—becomes porous to the impressions of our inner life. Dimly at first, and more strongly as time goes on, we begin to realize the fact of this inner experience, and—what is more to us than all else—the continuity of our consciousness; the fact that consciousness never ceases, no matter on what plane we may be acting. Therefore, we may have in our own bodies and during our lifetime—not a promise—but a sense, a realization, a knowledge of immortality here and now!

We have been taught to believe. But belief is not knowledge. We have been taught to believe in a formula, but a formula is not knowledge. So, we have gone astray in every direction and made of this life

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a terror to ourselves. We are afraid of death, of disaster; we are always buttressing ourselves with some sort of guard in this or that direction. We are afraid to trust the very God we say we believe in. We will not trust Christ. We will use all the means we can think of to look out for ourselves. Each one of us is Spirit and each one of us is using spiritual powers to induce what we call good and what we call evil; but the

misapplication of the spiritual powers, in default of real knowledge, must lead us to misery. So we have to know what we are, and to think and live in the light of our own real natures. Then we shall know the truth within ourselves. We shall understand ourselves and we shall understand our fellow-men, and we shall never again say, "Our God and other Gods," but the SELF of all creatures. We shall see the Self as all and in all; we will act for and as the Self, because the Self acts only through the creatures; and we shall see every being—man, below man, or above man—as an aspect of ourselves; as individualized beings we will try more and more to exercise the spiritual knowledge that is our own heritage. Like the prodigal son who ate the husks with the swine and then suddenly remembered his Father's house, we will say: "I will arise and go to my Father." For there is no one so wicked, so ignorant, so poorly endowed that he may not make good progress in the right direction; on whom the light may not dawn and a feeling of power and strength and purpose arise that will do away with fear and make him a strong helpful being in the world of men. Far from taking us away from our families, our duties, our business, or our citizenship, this knowledge will make us better citizens, better husbands, better fathers, better patriots, if you will, than ever we were before—patriots of not just one country, but of all.

THE KINGLY MYSTERY

The "kingly mystery" is Life itself. We all have Life. We all are Life. Every being everywhere is Life—expresses Life. To know what is Life itself is to know the mystery. But there is a condition precedent to this mysterious knowledge, stated by Krishna, in the

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opening of the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita: "Unto thee who findeth no fault I will now make known this most mysterious knowledge, coupled with a realization of it, which having known thou shalt be delivered from evil." When the one who desires to learn is not in a critical attitude, when he has sensed in one way or another that truth lies in a certain direction and gives all his attention to it without quarreling with terms or the ideas put forward, his is the attitude of the true student. The one who desires to know must set aside for the time being all preconceptions, pride, and prejudices which he may have held, and then he is ready to begin his studies— to take the first step in the right direction.

The world is full of false ideas, false religions, false philosophies which must be thrown away. We of the Western peoples have been taught that we were poor miserable sinners who could do nothing of ourselves. We have assumed that we are poor miserable sinners and have acted as such. Our whole civilization is colored and steeped through with this

falsity. Our theologies, our sciences, our commercial, social and political conditions are all based on this false idea, which in its turn rests upon another equally false—that man is here on earth for once only. Hence, that his entrance on this physical scene was through the act of others, and we believe that whatever of merit or demerit is his was handed on to him by his forebears. As a consequence, man constantly shifts his responsibility, and acts as an irresponsible being. The whole falsity of our existence is centered there, for we are responsible for every ill that exists among us; every kind of suffering on every hand has been brought about through a false idea, and the false action which followed. What is sin, disease, sorrow and suffering but the result of our own thoughts and actions?

Again, we say “we cannot know;” or, “this life is all there is.” Therefore, the whole force of our consciousness is directed in the line of that one false idea and inhibited in the expression of any other; whereas all directions lie absolutely open to us, if only we understand our own natures. Man circumscribes his own conditions by the false ideas he holds in regard to life. No one holds him back. He holds himself back. Yet, even with his narrowing, limiting ideas and conceptions,

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he is able to accomplish wonderful things. Whatever he sets out to do on the purely physical, material plane of life, he accomplishes in a shorter or greater length of time. If his ideas of religion are all concerned with the physical aspect of life, however, how can he know more? All the conquests that he can make will be physical conquests. What could it avail him in the direction of real knowledge, if he continued similar conquests from civilization to civilization, age to age, planet to planet, solar system to solar system? He could gain nothing but a small sum of possible combinations and correlations, and in all that search and effort would not have gained the first fundamental of true knowledge, of true thought and action.

The kingly mystery of Life can not mean physical existence, which is merely one aspect of the Great Life. We have to go deeper into our own natures, and into the natures of all beings, in order to grasp what that great mystery is. Then the lives of all beings become clear Unto us; we understand what all phases of existence mean; we see the causes for all the difficulties that surround us; we know how to bring about better results, and we perceive from the very first that the power lies in us, and in us alone, to bring about all future changes for ourselves. Looking at all existence from a universal point of view, we become able to exercise the power which lies in the essential spiritual basis of every being, high or low. The One Self appears only to be divided among the creatures; in reality, It is not divided at all. Each being is That in his essential nature. In It is the foundation of all power; in It lies the power of unfolding, of evolution, which makes possible for each being—representing one ray of that One Life—the attainment of a full knowledge of Life in his own true nature.

Each one of us stands in the midst of a great and silent evolution. Each one of us sees many expressions of different beings— those of the same grade as ourselves and beings of grades below us. We find relations with other elements, the power of which we do not see, the source of which we do not grasp, yet the effects of which we feel. On every hand we are getting effects from different beings of different grades, each one receiving those effects differently. The beings below us in forms of the mineral, vegetable, and animal world are all working,

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just as we are working, toward a greater and greater realization of the whole. Sparks of the One Spirit, of the One Consciousness, they have begun their little lives in forms, or bodies, by which they may contact others. As they have need for better and better instruments, need for further and further contact, they evolve, from within, a better instrument. Such is the whole course of evolution, always from within outwards, and always with the tendency to an increasing individuality. From the one ocean of Life there finally tends to arise—Divinity.

Divinity is always acquired. It is not an endowment. It does not exist of itself. If we could be made good, if we could be made to turn around and take a righteous course, life might seem very much easier to us. But there is no escaping the law; no one can get us “off” from the effects of our wrong-doing; no one can confer knowledge on another. Each one has to see and know for himself. Each one has to gain Divinity of himself, and in his own way. We think of this as a common world. But it is not so. There are no two people who look at life from the same view point, who have the same likes and dislikes, whom the same things affect in exactly the same way. No two people are alike either in life or after the death of the body. Each makes his own state; each makes his own limitations; each acquires his own Divinity. Divinity lies latent in each one of us; all powers lie latent in every one, and no being anywhere can be greater than we may become.

What is Divinity but all-inclusive knowledge? True spirituality is not a hazy condition. It is not something that denies any portion of the universe, nor any kind of being. A hazy abstract condition would mean no men, no principles, no opposites; but Divine spirituality is the power to know and see whatever is wished known or seen; it is an intimate knowledge of the ultimate essence of everything in nature. Such knowledge would not mean seeing all things at once, nor being everywhere at the same time, but it is the power to see and know in any direction—the power to grasp whatever it wishes, the power to shut out whatever it wishes. Otherwise it would be no power at all; there would be no use in having power and wisdom, and

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such beings as the Masters could be afflicted with all the grief and misery in the world, unable to help where help is needed and possible.

All-inclusive knowledge lies before every living being, if he will but take the necessary steps. What prevents him are the false ideas he holds; for thought is the basis of all action, and wrong ideas in regard to life inevitably bring about wrong actions. We have thought we are all different, because we have different ideas, but, in essence, we are One. The One Life is in each of us. Each one of us stands in the same position, looking out; all the rest are seen. Starting from this point, we begin to find ourselves, to see ourselves, to feel ourselves, and, in feeling ourselves, feel all others. All that a man can know of God is what he knows in himself, through himself, and by himself. Never by any outside presentation can that realization be gained. All the great saviors of all times have never asked man to rely on some outside God, to fear some devil, to go by this or that revelation, to believe in any book, church, 'ology,' or 'ism' of any kind. They have asked him to take the step that the height of his calling demands—to know himself, to know his own true nature, and the nature of every other being. They have shown that the Real Man must assert himself, and must act in accordance with his own nature, and the responsibility which the oneness of all nature demands.

Man occupies the most important place in the whole scheme of evolution. He stands where Spirit and matter meet. He is the link between the higher beings and those below. He has so to act, so to think and act, in and upon and with this physical matter that he raises it all up, and gives it another tendency, another trend. By the very constitution of his nature, by reason of his being connected as he is in a physical body with all nature, the Secret Doctrine states that man can become greater than any one of the Dhyan Chohans and equal to all of them put together. That is the goal which lies before him—the goal of the 'Kingly Mystery'—the seeing and knowing and feeling and acting universally. For there is a power in man which enables him to judge aright; he has the all-seeing eye—the all-encompassing sight which permits him to see the justice of all things. And always there is present the power of choice in one direction or an

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other. The questions before each human being are: Whom will ye serve? Will you serve the higher spiritual nature, or the body of flesh? WHOM CHOOSE YE THIS DAY?

THE RECOGNITION OF LAW

We have to assume either that this is a universe of law or a universe of chaos, chance, accident. In fact, we know perfectly well that it is not a universe of chance, because everything we use and understand we see to be under law; and where something befalls

us, the cause of which we cannot discern, we none the less assume a cause and try to find it. We cannot even imagine an effect without a cause.

The first thing that the student has to learn to perceive in everything and in every circumstance is the reign of law. We recognize law in part, but not in full, as it should be recognized. Mistaking our own nature, by the very power of that nature, we set in motion causes that produce the results we now feel, and then call those results by such terms as "destiny," "fate," "chance," or the "will of God." The operation of law to most minds means a fate which befalls us wherein we are benefited or afflicted, but over which we have no control, and in producing which we had no hand. Yet the operation of law can be easily understood. It has been enunciated by all the great Teachers of the past as meaning action and its consequent reaction. Let us remember that these are not two separate and unrelated things— Cause and Effect, Action and Reaction, are the two aspects of one and the same thing. In Sanskrit, both these aspects are included in the one word, Karma.

Karma has been recognized in the Christian scriptures, with which we are most familiar, in the expression, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." By consequence, we should easily see that whatever a man is reaping, that he must have sown. Once we get the conception that actions do not produce themselves, that law does not operate of itself, we can see that we cause actions and experience their reactions; that it is we who set up causes and feel their effects.

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Cause and effect, action and reaction—the operation of law—are seen to be in ourselves, not outside. There is no action unless there is a being to make it and to feel its effects. Everything that happens to any being has its antecedent cause, and that cause lies in some past action of the being himself. In other words, law rules on every plane of being, and every being of every grade is under that law.

We are all reaping what we have sown, individually and collectively; for we must know that we never act alone. We always act on and in connection with others, affecting them for good or evil, and we get the necessary reaction from the causes set in motion by ourselves. This presents to us the idea of absolute Justice, for under such a conception of Law each being receives exactly what he gives.

This points to another conception: there could not be action and its consequent reaction, unless there were a community of being amongst us. There must be that in our natures which is peculiar to none, but common to all. In other words, we have all sprung from the same Source; we are all traveling toward the same Goal. The path differs only with the pilgrims. The causes that each one sets in motion determine the path that one must follow. This might be called "destiny," if we understand that it is a destiny of our own

creation. Being created by us, it can be sustained by us or changed by us. If we do not like the “destiny” that befalls us, the effects that surround us, the conditions that encompass us, all we have to do is to set in motion such causes as will produce other and more desirable effects. But we have to do it; no one else can do it for us. No one holds us back. No one propels us forward.

There is no difference in our powers. Each one of us has the same power to perceive, to experience, to learn. ‘What we learn differs, our experiences differ, our perceptions differ, but that does not show a difference in our powers—it shows a difference only in the application of those powers. Each one of us contains within himself the same possibilities as exist anywhere and everywhere in the universe. The lines that we have hitherto taken have brought us to whatever pass, conditions or surroundings that may obtain at the present time. But we might have gone another way and produced an altogether

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different environment. We ought to see that even now, however hampered we may be as the result of mistaken actions in the past, we have not lost and can never lose our power to set other and better causes in motion. The path toward all knowledge lies before us: “All nature lies before you—take what you can.”

This means that all beings below man, and all beings above man, as well as man himself, have gained whatever individual positions they may now be in by their own exertions. It means that no being is standing still; all are acting, all progressing in one direction or another, according to the lines they have followed and are following. It also means that all the beings below man will some time reach our stage, and that every being above man has passed through stages similar to our own—which is evolution carried to its highest point, spiritual and mental, as well as physical. We have applied the great Truths of nature only in a partial, a limited, a personal sense. These are universal truths and should be applied in a universal sense, if we desire to arrive at the fullest recognition of them.

The life in each of us is the Universal Life. Many imagine that Life means existence in a physical body, and that only; that outside of physical existence there is no life. But Life includes all things and forms from the highest spiritual down to life in its grossest form; it is the same Life all through, common to all. It is the One Life, the One Spirit in each and all, so that in each being of every grade there lies the potentiality of All-Being. There is that in each which is beginningless and endless, which is changeless; and that, though illimitable, invisible, inconceivable, can be realized by every human being.

Some illustrations will bring this fact forcibly to our minds. We speak of ourselves, of our identity. We say, “I was a child; when I was a young man or woman; when I was middle-aged; as I am today; as I will be in the future.” Now, what is That, itself unchanged, which is going through all those changes? The same “I,” the same identity. That does not change.

The body changes, the ideas—the mind—change, the surroundings change. But the Man himself, the identity,

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remains unchanged through all these changes of body, scene and circumstance.

Again, take the power of seeing: we all have that power, and no matter how much we exercise it, it still remains the power to perceive. It is not changed by what we see. And we may consider this: change cannot see change. Only that which is permanent can see change. So, there is that in us which is permanent, which is Real, which is of the highest, which is a ray from and one with the Supreme, the universal Principle or Power, the creator, the sustainer, the regenerator of all that was, is, or ever shall be. We have to realize That—each one for himself—first by recognizing that IT IS, omnipresent, eternal, boundless and immutable; second, by divesting ourselves of those things we thought It to be: that It is this body, this mind, these circumstances. All these are changing things, things seen; but that which is the Real, the Supreme, our very Self and the Self of all things, is not subject to change; It is changeless; It cannot be seen, for It is the Perceiver.

The ideas we entertain of the Supreme, of Law, of Nature, and of our own Being govern the actions we perform. When we were children, we had certain ideas, and we acted according to them, and so on, all through the years. Some of our ideas we have from time to time discarded, and others that we have collected have taken their place. We are now acting according to the ideas we now hold. Are they the best and highest possible to us?

If we change our ideas, we change our actions. If we see that Law rules, that this Law is inherent in our highest nature and not outside of us, we shall see that it is the Spirit in us—our very Self—that is the cause and sustainer of all our actions; and this Spirit by its very power as the Highest, through false ideas creates for itself false positions and false destinies. We have often adopted and we often change our ideas without any real consideration as to their truth, as to their relation to Life, as to their bearing upon existence. We must adopt and hold fast to three great ideas: that each human being has what are called the 'attributes of the God power of creation, the power of preservation as long as that creation seems

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satisfactory, and the power to destroy that creation and regenerate better ones. All we have to do is to realize our own real nature, see what our defects are, strengthen our virtues, and move on. Just so surely as we do this, we shall find that our Virtues and strength increase, and our defects gradually fall away.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

Christian theology states that evil came into the world through the sin of the first man's eating of the tree of forbidden fruit. All men sinned in Adam; because of Adam's sin, every other being is and has been a sinner. Strangely enough this first man was made by a Superior Being in His own image, or, in other words, perfect; yet, he was not able to restrain himself from doing those things which he had been forbidden to do. In the very first being created in the image of the "Supreme," there was a tendency to do wrong!

We have, then, in this creation, out of nothing, a very limited Creator, as it is perfectly patent that any being must be. A being could be neither infinite, supreme, nor omnipresent; for there is That in which all beings, however high, or planets, or solar-systems, have their existence—Space, which exists whether there is anything in it or not; which has no beginning nor ending; which always is; which is outside as well as inside of every being. Any being must be less than Space; could the Absolute be less than Space? Illimitability and infinitude are not in relation to any being whatever; hence creation from the point of view of a Creator has to be abandoned.

But the existence of all beings—not only of mankind, but of beings of every grade and everywhere—has to be accounted for: what is the basis of all existence? We have to go back of all form, back of every kind of being, to see that all beings and all forms spring from One Source, which is not different in any. It is in deed the Supreme which lies within and behind every being; every being of every kind in the universe is in its innermost essence a ray from and one with It. It is Life. It is Spirit. It is Consciousness. Each is God in his innermost Essence.

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Taking this basis for our thinking, let us ask the question: under what process do things become? What brings about the operation of all the different forms that we see? Whether consciously or unconsciously, we all recognize the fact that Law rules in this universe, but what we have to understand is that Law is merely the inter-relation and inter-action and inter-dependence of all the acts of all beings concerned in the universe. The one inclusive law is the law of action and reaction—a law not outside of, but inherent in the nature of every being. From the very Source there is the power to act, but there is no action unless there is a being to act and feel the effects of the action. If I act, I get re-action. If the highest archangel acts, he gets the re-action of his action. There are two kinds of reactions produced from acts: those that are good or beneficent; those that are evil or maleficent. The whole responsibility of every action rests upon each and every being. So, if any being finds himself in any given state, good or bad, it is because of his thoughts, words and deeds—his own, and those of nobody else. We get some good and we get some evil, all of our own reaping; but all the time, every single moment of our existence, we have the power of choice in the direction of good or evil.

Good has no existence by itself; evil has no existence by itself. The two terms relate to matters of conduct and of impressions we receive. They merely characterize the effects produced upon us: a thing is "good" to us if it benefits us in any way, and "evil" if it does not benefit us. Who is it that judges between good and evil effects? In every case, it is the man himself. One man will say such and such things are good for me, and such and such things are evil; while another man, with a different point of view and different relations to things, will perhaps say the exact contrary about the very same matters. So, it always resolves itself into the individual point of view: in the last analysis each man is himself the sole director and final authority as to what is good and what is evil, so far as he is concerned.

We need to ask ourselves if we have always followed that which seemed to us to be the best course to follow; and, then again, if we have, did we consider that course from the point of view of personal

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self-benefit, or from the point of view of benefit to all others. For if we moved along the line of that which at the time seemed best for us personally, we must have acted in a way that afflicted others; we must have done evil to others, whether consciously or unconsciously, by obstructing their path. There we sowed evilly, and we either have reaped or will reap evilly. The very first act that was selfishly done was the origin of evil so far as that being was concerned. Likewise, wherever there was an unselfish act, there was the origin of good for him. Let us remember, too, that the Tree of Knowledge mentioned in the Bible was the knowledge of both good and evil. Good and evil are not to be considered separately, but together. You cannot tell good except by its opposite, evil. Goodness would speedily cease to be such, were it not for the operation of its contrary.

There are many things in life regarded by us as evils----like sorrow and death—which are not, in fact, evils. They are merely stages and conditions through which we pass in our progress up the ladder of development. We need not be afraid of death, for death will never touch us at all. We pass on out of life, and on. One of the Great Teachers said that death ever comes to the Ego as a friend. There is no need to fear anything, for there is nothing in the universe, high or low, that can ever destroy us—our consciousness, or our acquired individuality. Mistakes occur, for many of our actions are performed through ignorance, and evil results follow. Even so, it is through those very wrong actions that we learn. It is through the operation of vice that virtue is seen as a resistance to vice.

The origin of evil is to be found in ignorance of our own true natures. There are no afflictions put upon us by any being other than ourselves. We are afflicted just to the extent that we make ourselves open to affliction. Things affect some people terribly. The same things affect other people very little or not at all. Why? Because of their point of

view. Attitude towards things makes the suffering or the not suffering, the pleasure or the pain—not the things in themselves. If we knew ourselves to be divine beings merely going through a school of life—our whole purpose to learn—what would there be to fear, or even to be anxious about? If it were not for the obstacles

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in life—if life were one happy, placid dream—we never would make the motion or the effort that would arouse the highest characteristics of thought and action. It is by reason of the obstacles we have to overcome that we become stronger and obtain nobler traits. There is no such thing as a divinely created being, for everything that exists becomes.

Is it not true that now we can look back upon and smile at anything ‘that ever happened to us in the past? It looked awful at the time, but it has passed, and we can see that from those very things came something of gain, of strength and wisdom. Under the law no one can meet with an obstacle which he is not able to overcome; the obstacle is but an opportunity for him to get rid of some defect which he now possesses. Often the very things which seem the most difficult for us prove to be the most beneficent.

Those who stand the greatest chance of loss in the future are those who have the easy times. When one has ‘Karma—that is, when everything is coming his way—he is prone to take the ease of it and flow with the current of the river, missing many an opportunity to do good. Through these errors of omission, which are as bad as any errors of commission, he fails to understand that he has diminished his own stock of good Karma and must of necessity share in the evil which flows from his lack of appreciation of the situation and his opportunity. We need never fear our opportunities, but should always act up to them, relying on the law of our own spiritual being to carry us through any thing and everything. The Path is within ourselves, not outside; each of us is the stair to his own development.

We have so long been ruled by political and religious man-made laws that we have come to believe in them. Yet, goodness does not need laws. Our laws are based on the ignorance and selfishness and wickedness in men’s natures; they are made to restrain the evil which we think is ineradicable and incurable because ‘we all sinned in Adam and cannot help it.’ Then, too, because we think we know what is good and what is evil, we are very anxious that everybody else should be made to think in the same way. We want to prohibit those things which we do not desire ourselves; we want other people

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to eat what we think they ought to eat, and to clothe themselves as we think they should be clothed. We talk much of the “rights” of men. But we have just one right, and that is the right to do right. No man was ever made “good” by law; no man was ever made moral by law. Each man must be a law for himself, both moral and spiritual.

Are we proud of this civilization, made by the collective thought and action of every individual in it? Have our telephones, automobiles, airplanes, and radiographs made us any more divine? Do they measure our true progress? No; because ignorance and selfishness still lie in every human heart; because men, according to the vicarious atonement idea, blame their parents for their wrong attributes and tendencies, and accept only the good as their own. They are unjust, for both good and bad are their own earnings. If we have good, let us be happy that at some time we earned it; if we are in bad case, let us be glad, claim it, understand it and correct it. If we want a civilization better than the one, we have now, we are the ones to start right now to make it. No one else will make it for us. We have to set the lines in motion towards a true civilization from a true basis; but if we think we are not able to do much and are not now doing what we can, it is certain we never can do more. As we do what we can, greater opportunities arise to do. Until we do what is before us, never will any greater opportunities arise.

When we get the right attitude of mind—and that is what discipleship is—there is not a quality in us, not a force, not an attribute, but can be put to the best and highest use. We do not get off this plane. We do not cut off any part of our being. We do not destroy the usefulness of any part of us, but put all to the proper use and for the proper end. Herein is seen the difference between one who knows and one who does not know. One who knows does not get off to the Christian's heaven, nor to any other heaven. He works right here where he finds himself and does the best work, he can with the instrument he now has, fearing nothing, trusting the Law of his own being. If any being will trust the Law of his own nature, if he will work on with nature by helping all others in every direction possible, then

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all nature will turn and help him. It never was otherwise. It cannot be otherwise.

WHAT REINCARNATES?

What reincarnates is a mystery to many minds because they find a difficulty in understanding such a permanency as must stand behind repeated incarnations. They know that the body is born and dies and is dissolved, but their minds are so identified with the body in its relations and surroundings that they are unable to dissociate themselves from it. They think of themselves as persons, as bodies of a physical nature, and hence cannot see where in them may reside that power of incarnating from life to life.

Theosophy presents a larger view in showing that man is not his body, because the body is continually changing; that man is not his mind, because he is constantly changing his mind; that there is in man a permanency which is the identity throughout all kinds of embodiments. There has been no change in our identity from childhood up to the present

day. The body has changed; the surroundings have changed; but the identity remains the same and will not change from now on through all changes of body or mind or circumstance. That in us which is itself unchanging is the only real. Nothing is real that changes. It is only the real that perceives change. Change cannot see change. Only that which is constant perceives change; only the permanent can perceive impermanence. However dimly we may perceive it, there is that in us which is eternal and changeless.

This unchanging, constant, and immortal something in us is not absent from any particle or any being whatever. There is only one Life in the world to which we, as well as all other beings, pertain. We all proceeded from the same one Source—not many— and we are proceeding on the same path to the same great goal. The ancients said that the Divine Self is in all beings, but in all it does not shine forth. The real is within, and may be realized by any human being in himself. Everyone needs that realization that he may shine forth and express the God within, which all beings but partially express.

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If then the Source is the same—the One Spirit—in all beings, why so many forms, so many, personalities, so many individualizations? All, again Theosophy shows, are developments. In that great Ocean of Life, which is at the same time Consciousness and Spirit, we move and live and have our being. That ocean is separable into its constituent drops and the separation is affected through the great course of evolution. Even in the kingdoms below us, which are from the same Source, the tendency to separate into drops of individualized consciousness goes on in ever-increasing degree. In the animal kingdom, those species that are nearest to us make an approach to self-consciousness; but we as human beings have arrived at that stage where each is a constituent drop of the great ocean of Consciousness. As with an ocean of water, each drop of it contains all the elements of the great body, so each constituent drop of humanity—a human being—contains within its range every element of the great universe.

The same power exists in all of us, yet where we stand on the ladder of being, we see many below us and others greater than we above us. Humanity now is building the bridge of thought, the bridge of that connects the lower with the higher. The whole purpose of incarnation, or our descent into matter, was not only to gain further knowledge of matter, but to impel the lower kingdoms to come up to where we are. We stand as gods to the lower kingdoms. It is our impulsion that brings them weal or woe. It is our misconception of the aim of life that makes Nature so hard; that causes all the distress and disasters which afflict us in cyclones, tornadoes, diseases, pestilences of every kind. All are our own doing; and why? Because there is a sublimation of mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms in our bodies, which are lives in themselves. Every cell in our bodies has its birth, youth, manhood, decay and death, and its reincarnation. We are impelling each one of those lives according to whatever thought, will, or feeling we

may have, whether for help or injury to others. These lives go out from us for good or evil, back into their kingdoms with good or evil. So, by our lack of understanding of our own true natures, without a comprehension of universal brotherhood, we are imperfectly performing our duties on this plane

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and are imperfectly helping the evolution of the lower kingdoms. We shall realize our responsibility to them only as we see that every being is on his way upward; that all above man have been men at one time; that all below man will some time reach man's estate, when we have gone on further; that all forms, all beings, all individualizations are but aspects of the One Spirit.

Granted, then, that this one unchanging Spirit is in all—the cause of all evolutionary development, the cause of all incarnations — where, we may ask, do we carry the power to see and know from life to life? How is continuity of knowledge, gained by observation and experience, preserved? How is the individual maintained as such?

We should remember that we were self-conscious beings when this planet began; some even were self-conscious when this solar system began; for there is a difference in degree of development among human beings. If the planet or solar system began in a state of primordial substance, or nebulous matter, as Science calls it, then we must have had bodies of that state of substance. In that finest substance are all the possibilities of every grade of matter, and hence it is that within the true body of primordial matter all the changes of coarser and coarser substance have been brought about; and within that body is all experience. Our birth is within that body. Everything that occurs to us is within that body—a body of a nature which does not change throughout the whole Manvantara. Each one has such a body of finest substance, of the inner nature, which is the real container for the individual. In it he lives and moves and has his being, and yet even the great glory and fineness of that body is not the man; it is merely the highest vesture of the Soul. The Real Man we are is the Man that was, that is, and that ever shall be, for whom the hour will never strike— Man, the thinker; Man, the perceiver—always thinking, continually acting.

Life is one. Spirit is one. Consciousness is one. These three are one—a trinity—and we are that trinity. All the changes of substance and form are brought about by Spirit and Consciousness and expressed in various forms of life. We are that One Spirit, each standing in a vast assemblage of beings in this great universe, seeing

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and knowing what he can through the instruments he has. We are the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; or, in theosophical parlance, we are Alma, Buddhi, and Manas. Atma is the One Spirit, not belonging to anyone, but to all. Buddhi is the

sublimated experience of all the past. Manas is the thinking power, the thinker, the man, the immortal man. There is no man without the Spirit, and no man without that experience of the past; but the mind is the realm of creation, of ideas; and the Spirit itself, with all its power, acts according to the ideas that are in the mind.

The Voice of The Silence says, "Mind is like a mirror. It gathers dust while it reflects." It needs soul-wisdom to brush away the dust. This mind of ours, or that which we call the mind, is merely the reflector, which presents as we train it, different pictures. The Spirit acts in accord with the ideas seen, for good or for evil. Is there evil in the world? It is the power of Spirit that caused it. Is there good in the world? It is the power of Spirit that caused it. For there is only one power. The misdirection of that power brings evil; its right direction brings good.

We must give up the idea that we are poor, weak, miserable creatures who can never do anything for ourselves; for as long as we hold that idea, so long will we never do anything. We must get the other idea—that we are Spirit, that we are immortal—and when we come to realize what that means, the power of it will flow directly in and through us, unrestricted in any direction, save by the instruments which we ourselves caused to be imperfect. let us get away from the idea that we are this poor, miserable, defective physical body over which we have so little control. We cannot stop a heart beat; we cannot stop the breath without destroying the body; we cannot stop the constant dissociation of matter that goes on in it, nor prevent its final dissolution. Some people talk of "demonstrating" against death, but we might as well try to demonstrate against the trees shedding their leaves when the winter blasts come. Death will always be, and there is a great advantage in it. If we could not change our bodies, how would there be any chance for advancement? Are we so

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well pleased with the bodies now ours that we would desire no change? Certainly not. There is only one thing in this life that can be retained permanently, and that is the spiritual nature, and the great divine compassion which we may translate by the word "love."

We are the reincarnating Egos who will continue to incarnate until the great task which we undertook is completed. That task is the raising up of the whole of humanity to the highest possible

stage of perfection on an earth of this kind. We incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of wickedness, and the establishment of righteousness. That is what we are here for, whether we know it or not, and we must come to a recognition of the immortality of our own natures before we shall ever relieve ourselves from the distresses that afflict humanity everywhere. We have to bring

ourselves in touch and tune with the whole great purpose of Nature which is the evolution of Soul, and for which alone all the universe exists.

REAL MEMORY

The general idea with regard to memory is that it depends entirely on the orderly functioning of the physical brain, and that where derangement of that function occurs, there is loss of memory. It is quite true that certain forms of memory depend upon the brain, as in those two particular functions known as remembrance and recollection. In remembrance, we can get the idea, but not all the particulars that have brought about some feeling, event, or circumstance of the past; in recollection, we can collect back from one point all the other points connected with it. But there is a third function of the memory, known as reminiscence, which is not at all dependent upon the brain. It is brought into function oftentimes, not by any present object or occurrence arousing attention in that direction, but as it were, springs direct from the soul itself. It is a direct perception of what was. It comes from something behind the brain—the brain serving merely as a sort of filter, or interceptor, or translator of impressions.

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We can understand why remote memories are difficult to recall to our brain perception, when we consider the fact that the brain cells are constantly changing. It is not conceivable that the millions of impressions received during a lifetime could be retained and given out again by those changing cells. All the time during our lives there is a continuity of perception, but we do not remember one-thousandth part of the impressions that we have received in those days or years. Very few events are impressed upon us, or are immediately translatable through the brain, by way of remembrance. Even if we so desired, we could never make any complete history of all those impressions through the faculty of recollection. Yet there is the innate faculty of recalling and recollecting in such a way as to have a consecutive or synthetic grasp of all those impressions through reminiscence, that faculty of memory which applies to the soul—is a peculiarly innate quality of the soul.

To reach into and exercise soul memory, we must first understand the real nature of man. We must first see that all beings of every grade—not only man, but the beings above man and the beings below man—are of the same essence, the same Spirit, the same Life, and of the same potential powers. The higher beings have brought these potential powers into activity, and differ from the lower orders by reason of a greater degree of development, a greater range of perception and a finer evolution of form. But highest as well as lowest are rays from and one with the Divine Absolute Principle. Each one is the Seer, the Perceiver, who stands in the center of his own universe, through which alone we may know all that may be known of the Highest.

We must recognize the fact that this is a universe of law, with no chance or accident anywhere in it, and that we have arrived at our present position under law—the law of our own being, set in operation by ourselves; that the same law rules in every direction in space and in nature. The races of men that now exist are the result of races of men which preceded them; the planet on which we now live is the result of a planet that preceded it; the solar system of which our planet is a part is the result of a solar system that preceded

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it. Everything is an exact consequence of that which preceded it—*everything is a repetition of that which was*. This return of the same action or preceding impression occurs under the true aspect of memory; it is the memory of what we have been through that brings about the repetition.

On the physical plane, the action of true memory is seen in all those stages through which the human form goes from conception to birth—representations, in fact, of the evolution of earlier races. In every act of our existence we are exhibiting true memory, whether we realize it or not. The memory of walking is with us now; the memory of talking is with us now. We may not remember how nor when we learned to talk or to walk, but we have present with us the knowing how to walk and to talk. True memory is just that—the possession of the knowledge of the past. It is memory which connects us physically with the body, through all changes of body, scene and circumstance; without it, we should be living merely from impression to impression; there would be no connection whatever with the past and there would be no sense of self-identity.

Memory exists also in other inner departments of our nature. Living on the physical plane, our ideas connected almost entirely with the “three-dimensional” state of matter, we are no more conscious of those inner planes of being than, when in sleep, we are conscious of the physical plane, being absolutely shut off from the outside world, from the happenings to our friends, to the nation, and to the world at large, which are then of no consequence whatever to us. Yet there is an active life in those inner departments of our nature, and there is a memory of it. The Thinker who uses the brain in the waking state is simply acting on another plane of matter and using another plane of memory. Every plane of consciousness has a memory of its own.

That consciousness never ceases, but is continuously active, is evidenced by the fact that no one has ever experienced sleep. Nor does death come to us any more than sleep. We may be aware that sleep or death is coming for the body, but we know those states only as we see them in others. When we say “I was asleep,” we mean that

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the body was in the sleeping state, while we passed away altogether from this plane for the time being. Then we passed back again from the inner planes to this, picking up the memory of the waking state where we laid it down, and leaving behind the memory of what passed on the other side. There is no record made in this physical instrument of the inner planes, for the brain has not been trained in that direction, and hence it cannot translate those planes of consciousness, except in some partial recollections such as occur in dreams. Dreams attest that we are alive and active on inner planes; for in them, we think, speak, smell, taste, hear and move, as individuals, and never have any question as to our identity, even though the personality presented should be that of some past incarnation. The dreaming state is very close to the point of waking—the intermediate state between waking and sleep—so that we are able to impress the brain-cells with what has occurred before waking, and remember. But beyond the dreaming stage, which is a very short stage of sleep, there is a Vast extent of human thought and action. We go in and in until we are close to the source of our own being, where the Thinker is at work, where he knows all that he has been before—all his past incarnations—where he sees and knows himself as he is. The memory of all the experiences through which he has been as an individualized being is there in one consecutive whole. That, indeed, was the Paradise of man, when he walked with Deity, when he knew himself as he really was. True memory is the Paradise which all human beings should strive to regain. To recover that whole memory, to make that great knowledge of the past usable, here and now in the brain and in the body, is the true work of 'salvation. Only when we understand what we really are, shall we be able to take a conscious, active, purposeful part in the evolution of our race. Only when we gain the perception that we are the Eternal Spirit, that Death never touches us at all, that we may have a conscious life in spirit, not in matter—only when we begin to think and act from that basis, can true memory come through to the brain; only then can we know for ourselves, have nothing to ask of anyone, but have everything to give

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to every other one. That true memory is possible for every living being.

The barrier for every man is not in the memory, but in the false ideas of life according to which he acts. However much the soul remembers, if we are using the brain contrary to the nature of the soul, the brain cannot translate its impressions. The Thinker must transfer the memory of the soul to the brain, and he can do so only by thinking and acting along right lines during active waking consciousness, until the brain responds to the ideas and learns to transmit what occurs while the body is inoperative. Then the true memory of the past that is in the soul is our knowledge in the brain.

The Masters are those who have the true memory of every step through which They have gone—the knowledge of all past civilizations, the understanding of all that every human

being has to experience, the recognition of all the laws ruling evolution. As custodians of that knowledge, and as our Elder Brothers, They stand ready to help mankind in the only way open to Them—by recording as much of that knowledge as we can assimilate, by directing us to its proper use for the benefit of all other human beings, that all humanity may advance in an orderly way to the true goal. Greater and greater individualization, wider and wider range of perception, are the objects of evolution; but there are two paths by which we may reach the goal. One path leads to an individualization that is selfish, and self-righteous—a state of separateness from all human beings; on the other, there is no cessation of work for humanity. The Elder Brother goes as high as he can, but he stops before he enters the final door that separates him from the rest; he returns and takes up again a body of the race, as Jesus did, that he may help those who know less than He does. So we are never alone. Never will there come a time when those Great Beings will cease from that labor, which is a labor of love. But we are the ones who must determine for ourselves, sooner or later, whether to go on through aeons of suffering and millions of lives of ignorance, or to follow the path

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They show, which leads straight to the goal—which involves the power of direct cognition of truth without any mistake whatever, and which includes real memory.

THE CAUSE OF SORROW

We are never free from pain, sorrow, and suffering in the world. Pleasures come and go very lightly, but always the sorrow and suffering of life itself abides with us. If we could see and understand the cause of the sorrow existing in the world in every direction—not only the sorrows of the ordinary life but those brought about by collective action, as wars are—we should cease to make that cause. We have assumed that all these sorrows are due to external causes—to some higher being or beings, or to some outside laws of the universe; never to ourselves. And because we have never brought it home to ourselves that we are in any way connected with the causes of sorrow which come our way, we go on looking for something external to relieve us of those sorrows. Not all the religions that ever have existed on the face of the earth, not all that the sciences have so far achieved or may achieve will ever give us that knowledge, because the cause of sorrow does not lie outside; it lies within each one. Each one contains within himself the power to cause sorrow; he also has the power to cause its cessation.

The wisdom of the ages explains the cause of sorrow. It teaches that each being is spirit; that the power of spirit is illimitable, although we limit it because we assume that it is limited; that the changeless spirit in the heart of every being is behind every form, the cause and sustainer of all forms; that spirit is the force behind evolution, and also the force that rules and relates all things of whatever grade; that every being is the result of

an unfoldment from within outwards—of a desire for greater and greater expression. But we who have reached this stage of self-consciousness, unlike the lower kingdoms, now have the power of choice and can draw upon that illimitable source of our being and realize it while we live in a mortal and ever-changing body.

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Desire, in a limited way, with regard to the personality, is the cause of all sin, sorrow, and suffering. Such desire is based on selfish thought; it is not what others desire; it heeds not any other urge than its own. The unfulfilled desires, it is, that hurt us; yet do the fulfilled desires give us happiness? Never, for so soon as they are achieved, there begins a further desire for something more, something greater. With many conflicting desires, then, we live upon each other, we prey upon each other, we devour each other, we injure each other—in every way. There is no necessity for all this. It never was the original plan—the original nature of the development of man. There is never any need to desire. All our woes are self-inflicted; the very inherent power of spirit has plunged us into them and maintains us in them.

Yet misery, sorrow and suffering have a mission. It is usually only the misery we bring upon ourselves that makes us stop doing wrong, to look around and ask and see what is right. It is by our mistakes we learn to see the difference between right and wrong, and in seeing that difference is the whole story of progress. We have to be able to tell the difference. It is only through ‘opposites’—the perception of them and the employment of them—that any being can grow at all. There has always to be duality in nature. All human beings are One in spirit, dual in expression. Always there is the actor and something to act upon. Always there are the two—Purusha, the spirit, and Prakriti, matter—not two separate things, but two aspects of one and the same thing. No perception is possible unless we have that duality. We have to experience darkness first in order to see light, and so with the opposites of pleasure and pain. Without pain we could not understand pleasure; without pleasure we could not understand pain. What lies behind all advance in intelligence, from the lowest to the highest, is perception gained by that which acts, from that which is acted upon.

Law rules everywhere in nature in accord with the basis of duality. We call it the law of periodicity, but it is simply a statement of Karma, or action and reaction. What we call the laws of the elements are in reality but perceptions of the actions and reactions of various grades

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of intelligences. ‘What we call our seasons, and all the cycles of time or of individuals, are covered by that law—reaction from action previously sent forth. The people who form a nation are people who were together in other times; their collective actions have brought

them the same collective reactions. Every thought we have has its return of impression; every feeling we have has its return. All react upon us, coming back either impoverished or enriched. Thus, with the power to produce any kind of effect resident in us, we can understand the power of false, mistaken ideas. We can sustain these ideas interminably by the law of return of impression, and continually suffer reactions from them. The whole power of spirit used in a wrong direction, in ignorance of our own nature and the nature of beings in general, creates sorrow of every kind.

No one can stop us in our mistaken course so long as we foolishly entertain false ideas. Our evolution has been brought about by us under the laws of our own operation—action and reaction within ourselves—and in no other way. It is a mistake to think that good comes to us from outside quarters. It never does. Whatever good or whatever evil comes is the reaping of what we have sown, in every way and in every circumstance. There are no exceptions. We look for “justice.” We are getting it, according to our own thought and action. For let us remember that the plane of action is thought itself, that is to say—ideas. Action is merely the sequence of the concretion of thought. So, there is every necessity for us to clear out the rubbish which we hold as ideas. Our “minds,” as a rule, are found to be made of a bundle of ideas that somebody has handed on to us. We accept the ideas of the race, of the people about us, of this “ism” or that “ology,” and call it our mind, when, in reality, we have no mind of our own at all. The mind is the power to receive and to reject. What we receive and what we reject depends upon ourselves—on our ignorance or on our wisdom. There is nothing outside we have to learn, but everything inside. The task we have at hand is to understand our own natures.

If any great number of beings in this world should reach the understanding of their own natures, and so exercise their inherent spiritual

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powers for the benefit of their fellow-men, in no long time we should find the misery of the world most wonderfully abated. As was said of old, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. And one of our Teachers said, “Give me five hundred good, earnest, sincere, devoted men and women and I will move the world.” Our success does not depend upon any form of physical evolution, nor upon any form of scientific advancement. These are but means and not ends in themselves, though did we but know our own real powers, they could be carried to a pitch not yet dreamed of. We must and eventually will carry the civilization of the world to a higher stage than has ever before existed, but that will never be until men realize their own natures and act from that basis. We can go on indefinitely repeating the present thinking and acting, but so long as we do, just so long will there be sin and sorrow and suffering. Never will they cease, nor wars, diseases, pestilences, tornadoes, cyclones, nor earthquakes—for all these come from man’s errors.

We shall never find a vicarious atonement. We must take the results of what we sow. Recognizing that we are responsible for our own conditions, we must do our best to adjust them. Readjustment can come only through assuming our own spiritual birth right, instead of assuming that we are these unfortunate bodies that are born, live for a while and die; through the fulfillment of our duties in every direction as the opportunities are offered us. For we cannot work out our salvation alone. We cannot live alone. We cannot progress alone. We cannot raise ourselves beyond the rest, but must help all the rest to whatever stage we occupy, going further and further ourselves that we may be the better able to help and teach the others. Jesus was what he was because he became so. Buddha was what he was because he became so. There was a time when they were sinning and erring mortals like ourselves. But they saw the true path and turned and followed it, as in all time to come must every being.

Just so long as we think that we are physical beings and follow after this or that desire, just so long do we put off the day of readjustment and suffer from the causes we have set in motion. But when in

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place of false ideas we commence to base our thought and action on correct ideas, the brain begins to be clarified and to be permeable to the immense knowledge of the inner man—a knowledge which is not now recorded because of the wrong way in which we have trained it. The brain has to be made a good conductor for spiritual knowledge. If true knowledge were ours, would we have desires? Would we seek after this or that thing in physical life and expend our best energies upon them? No. Further, we would know that no matter what there is in the universe anywhere, nothing can stop the progress laid down for ourselves in a spiritual direction. We would also know that nothing can harm us; nothing can be wilder us. We would trust the law of our own spiritual nature, seeking only to do what good we can; seeking nothing for ourselves, but to do service in every possible way for every other being. Then we should be in accord with the nature of the whole, and the natures and forces of all beings would carry us along on the stream that brooks no obstacle whatever. Would we be sorrowful? Never; because we would be fulfilling the real purpose of spirit and soul in helping all other souls on the path, so far as the opportunity lay before us. In this course there is no need to strain and struggle; we have only to take those opportunities which our reactions bring us. The evil that comes to us—well, it is something for us to adjust, to balance. The good that comes to us—that too is the result of our own actions. So, we may take the good and enjoy it, and meet the evil without fear or trembling or resistance of any kind in an attempt to avoid it.

The only sorrow of the great Teachers, or Masters of Wisdom, is to see men perpetually engulfing themselves in sin and sorrow and suffering which They cannot prevent. One of Them was asked at one time, “Why is it with your great knowledge and power that

you do not make men think as they should?" He said, "The human soul is not so constituted. It has to see and act for itself." For the action is from within outward, and the power goes with the action. No one can save us but ourselves.

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WHAT SURVIVES AFTER DEATH?

Day after day we are constantly confronted by the fact that we are all subject to death. No matter how we may live, whether our lives bring to us failure or the greatest possible success in the eyes of the world, death is there at the end. So sure, as there is birth for us, so there is death. Each one knows that sooner or later death must be his portion; but what does he know of after-death?

'What, if anything, survives? Religions such as we have professed do not give us any information whatever on this most serious question; materialistic science presents us no solution; from neither religion nor science have we gained anything to rest upon when the great conqueror of all human bodies appears before us. Is there any hope in life that what we are doing may be of any value after death? Whether we can answer that question, or not, before death confronts us—the confronting of death will be there. The time will come.

If any solution to the problems presented by death exists, it must be perceptible during life to have any value for us as living human beings. It must be a reasonable solution, sufficiently evident to us as we now live, to convince us of the correctness of the solution. There must be clear evidence as to an understanding of the facts of life, before we may accept any explanation as to what must be after death. When we know the meaning of birth; when we know what we are working here in bodies for; when we know what all manifested life exists for—then, we may have an answer as to why we pass so few years in any one physical existence; we may know where are our friends, our parents, our grandparents, who lived as we are living but now are gone; we may know if life has ceased for them; and, then, if life can ever cease for us.

There is one fact of human existence which should guide us in our thinking—the fact of law, ruling in everything that we do. Is it not our knowledge, our perception of law that enables us to control the elements in nature? We control the various substances and elements by understanding the law of their operation. We know that the law of action and re-action prevails in nature; we recognize in

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nature the law of cause and effect. But do we not know that law rules in our very selves? We know there is a law under which the body grows from conception to birth, from birth to maturity, followed by gradual declination. Just as there is for man a cycle of birth,

youth, manhood, decay and death, so there is a succession of events in nature, which we perceive to be a universal law. Morning, noon, and night are followed by morning again; spring, summer, autumn, and winter are followed by spring again. We ought then to be able to perceive that, as in nature our birth this time is but in orderly succession after previous death, so must we come again and again for a life-time on earth, as we come again and again to our day-times after the night. We must have passed through a great sweep of existence to have reached this present birth, but that must also have been the operation of law. The choice lies between law and chaos. There cannot be law here and chaos there. All is under law; or, all is chaos. Our whole experience shows that law rules, and the conclusion becomes necessary that law rules in everything and in every circumstance. Law, therefore, must rule on both sides of death.

But is this law enforced upon us by some powerful Being? If so, there is no hope whatever for us. And who are WE operating under this all-inclusive law? If we are mere bodies, we are small and restricted beings. If all the life there is, is what we feel and experience in our bodies, life amounts to nothing. Very little thought, however, will convince us that we are not our bodies. We know that our bodies are under constant change from birth to the present time; constant change will go on until the cessation of these bodies; but we do not change. The same "I" was child, youth, young man, and older man. The identity has not changed at all through all the changes of body it has experienced. Nor are we our minds, as so many believe. Our minds are merely certain bundles of ideas in regard to life, and we must be greater than those minds because we can change them. Nor is there any imaginable limit to that changing. No matter how much knowledge we may acquire, we can go on learning; no matter what kind of a mind we may have, we possess

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the illimitable power to go on increasing it. If one doubts the existence of anything greater than mind, he has but to see that the very fact of doubting—the expression of doubt—shows an act and purpose beyond the idea. We could utterly refuse to think, and still exist. We must look deeper for ourselves than the mind and the body. Both are but instruments which WE use. Then, what can we be? There is that in us which lives, which thinks, which is life itself, which garners all experience, which itself changes not at all. It is smaller than the small, as the ancients said; it is greater than the great. It cannot be weighed nor measured. We cannot say where it is and where it is not; and yet it is the one thing in us—our very selves—---which enables us to have any experience, any idea or combination of ideas. Call it Spirit, if you will. Call it Life. Call it Consciousness; for we well know that we cannot have any experience unless we are conscious of it. The ancients said: "The Soul is the Perceiver, is Vision itself, pure and simple, and looks directly on ideas." Spirit sees the idea; actions flow from the ideas adopted. Our differences are in respect to mentality, in accordance with the kind and range of ideas;

but we have all sprung from the same Source; we all have a common basis, a common essential nature, which is Spirit and Life itself.

Our days and nights afford an illustration of the fact that we can let the body go, that we can depart from the body, and still exist. While we are awake in the day-time, we act outwardly through the organs of the body which serve to transmit and receive impressions. At night, these activities are stilled, and it is said that we sleep. But how may we know we are conscious during those hours of the night? Because when we awake, we can say, "I dreamed," and there is no question as to our identity in the dream. We were conscious, too, of having all the senses; we had, apparently, the powers of motion. Notwithstanding the dormant condition of the body in that state we call deep sleep, we were still acting, living, conscious beings. It may not be difficult to conceive that, during the greater portion of the night's rest passed in what is known as "dreamless slumber" of the body, we are conscious; that our action is of a higher and finer kind

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than in waking-life; that it is possible for us to keep a conscious hold on that action— to bring back into this brain of ours, which we are using during the day-time, the memory of every act on every inner plane of being. The soul—the Real Man—with all his past experiences is fully awake when the body is asleep. The night-time of the soul is the day-time of the body. It is only in exceptional cases, however, that a human being knows that he is conscious all the time; that Consciousness can never by any possibility cease. Yet each one can see for himself that if Consciousness ever ceased, there would be no possibility of its ever beginning again. We can see continuing consciousness in the fact that we are able to take up, each day in our life, the work of the day and days before.

Theosophy is presented for the purpose of showing that this full consciousness in the day-time, in operation through the body, is possible to every man. If we had that consciousness, what would death mean to us? It would mean no more than sleep. Death would mean merely a letting go of the body which had become useless to us. We should know that death could never touch us any more than sleep reaches us; that as our consciousness is continuous, whether the body is asleep or awake, so when the body dies, there is no cessation for us.

What, then, survives after death? The man himself, with all his tendencies, with all his experience. The Thinker, the Soul, is what survives, is what can never be extinguished, can never itself suffer, can never be involved, is always of its own nature, no matter what conditions a man may become involved in for the time being. Conditions, whether of joy or suffering, must have an ending; but the One who enjoys, the One who suffers, the One who feels, changes not at all. That which survives is our very selves—all that we call ourselves—the self who wakes, who dreams, who enjoys, who goes into different states, through all the worlds. Let us say that this life is a dream in which we have our sufferings

and our joys. When we awake, we shall have other experiences, but it is that something permanent in us which takes to itself of each and every experience; coming into any field of operation, it gathers experience according

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to the tendencies which itself has engendered on that plane of being. Thus man has no other experience on earth save that which is his very own, save that which he has made part of his action on this earth. The law of action and reaction, of cause and effect, sowing and reaping is, then, his own law.

What is it that survives? WE survive, as conscious beings, with all the powers of perception, with all that we have ever gained, and thus shall it ever be. There is no cessation for us. Bodies wear out in one life, as we know, when they are no longer capable and useful. Would we in wisdom wish to continue in such bodies? No: the soul demands a better instrument. We tear down the old house to build a better one—or it may be a worse one, we might remember. If we are selfish, if we work for this body alone, if we are against our fellow beings, then, in a body we shall have the reaction from our selfish action. This is law, and not sentiment. It is not the doings of our fellow men that we are suffering from, but the evil we have sown, coming back and pressing with its full weight against us. Not until man assumes his birthright and realizes that the whole course of evolution is the working out of the laws of justice, will he take the first step forward in true progress, which leads to conscious immortality.

CAN THE DEAD COMMUNICATE?

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 practised 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,

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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 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 catastrophies 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

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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.

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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 one’s existent on the other 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

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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" whatever, 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 affect some sort of communication, but after the great change known as "the second death" all connection with earth is broken off. A pure-minded

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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 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.

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SLEEP AND DREAMS

There is something in each of us which enters the state called dreams, the state called sleep, and the state called death. No understanding whatever can be had of the states into which we pass and from which we emerge save under the idea that there is an Ego, a thinker, a perceiver, a knower, an experiencer, who enters the states and re-emerges there from, and that this Ego, the real man, retains his integrity throughout them all.

We are more than any of the states we enter into, no matter how highly we may have considered any of those states. Even if we imagine that we have reached, or can reach, the highest state of intelligence and action—that which we call the divine—it is we who enter it. So an understanding of the states into which we go cannot be had until we recognize that there is That in us which goes through them all; then we must try to understand what that something is, and in this endeavor begin right where we now are; we cannot start from any other place or position than where we are at any time.

What do we find, then? That we are a continuing identity. We have passed through many changes from birth up to now, but our identity has not changed, no matter through what changes it may have passed, or may pass. When we get this fact firmly fixed in our minds,

we will have reached the point of understanding that there is an immortal nature in each of us; that it is divine in its essence, not subject to change; for It is changeless.

The dreaming state we enter just as we let go of the body, before we pass into the state of dreamless sleep; and on awakening is, again, the transitional state into which we return before resuming waking state in the body. We know that we have all the senses in dreams, although the body is quiescent, and the sense organs are not in use. We can see and feel, we hear, talk, and act, just as we do in waking state, without using the physical organs associated with those sensations and actions. This shows that we are conscious, alive, existent, although the body knows nothing. We know further that our identity

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is not disturbed by entering dream-state; it is we ourselves, and none other, experiencing that state.

Dreaming state is known to be a very short state as contrasted with the waking state. It is known that we can dream and experience through what seems to represent a very long period of time in the dream, though the state last but a few seconds by the clock. There is a portion, by far the greater portion, of the "night's rest" which is only known to us (in waking state) as "dreamless sleep." This is merely the slumber of the body. The body is then almost as if one had left it entirely. Yet the entity must be in contact somewhere, for he is existent all the time, and is conscious—the same identity. Were this not true, we would not wake, or on awakening there would be a new being altogether.

Further than these ideas as to dream and sleep Western psychologists have not gone. They do not know what was known ages ago, and what is known to some today, that the Ego, the man, the thinker, is more fully occupied, more his real self, during the dreamless slumber of the body than at any other time. So, it was said that the day-time of the body is the night-time of the soul, and the night-time of the body is the day-time of the soul. When the body sleeps, the real man is most active, with the greatest degree of intelligence, but thinking and acting on another plane altogether, in a different state altogether, from any known to us in ordinary waking human existence.

We know nothing about sleep, although we say that we experience it. What we know is that we are getting sleepy—that is, that the body is growing exhausted—but sleep never comes to us. We are awake in the day-time; we are conscious; we think. But our power to see and know when awake is applied almost exclusively to external things of a material kind, so that what we call knowledge—waking knowledge—is, practically, an application of all our powers to physical existence, and to that alone. When we sleep, what takes place?

During that interval we know that the body is absolutely irresponsive in regard to anything external. We do not know nor feel

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anything that happens to our friends. The most frightful calamities might occur around about us, and we would know nothing about them until we resumed control of the body. Yet we must have been alive, conscious, with an unchanged identity. This brings our minds to the question as to why or how it is that we know nothing when awake of that activity on higher and altogether different planes during the deep sleep of the body.

We have within us in abeyance, but not forgotten, not inaccessible, all that knowledge. It is recorded, impacted, in our imperishable nature as truly as any record can possibly be made—everything that we have been through, every degree of experience, of knowledge, that we have ever acquired. When we sleep—that is, when the body sleeps—we go back to that fountain of knowledge which is within ourselves; and “wake up” in the morning none the wiser. How can it be that, possessing such knowledge, possessing the powers that belong to immortal Spirit, to divine Intelligence, we nevertheless cannot use them, are not even aware of their existence in us?

There is a law known as Karma, the law of action and reaction, which has been stated: “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” We have so thought and acted while in the body as to produce finally an instrument that is not in accord with our own real nature. We have put the power of our intelligence upon a consideration and use of material things—things that appertain to a lower state of being than our own—and so have become involved in them. The brain that we use is responsive almost entirely to these lower ideas; so that when we return into it, upon awakening, there is nothing in that brain which will take the slightest impression or record of those states of consciousness through which we have passed.

If we are beings who have passed through higher states during sleep, how are we ever going to regain a knowledge of these possessions? If we are told that we are divine in nature, not earthly; that we have an immense past; that we have planes of consciousness higher than this and powers of action on those planes—what does

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that do for us? What does that impart to us? What does that arouse in us? Does it not make us look at life from a different standpoint than the one we have hitherto been accustomed to take?

Everything that we do in life, every result that we experience, is governed by some attitude of mind which we hold in regard to life. If one is an atheist, let us say, or a materialist, who thinks that life began with this body and will end with it, then all his thoughts and acts will be on that basis. But if he changes that idea, as he may, for the idea that he is immortal in essential nature, then that of itself begins to work a transformation.

It is not what we go through that counts; but what we learn from it. Knowledge is what we should desire; not comforts nor station. We desire to know, for in knowing we perceive the right things to do, the right thoughts to hold. As we are thinking all the time, we are thinking either good or evil or indifferent thoughts; our actions are good, evil or indifferent according to our thoughts. If we begin to think aright, we give direction to that Spiritual Force which is the very essence of our nature. Let a man think aright, let him think and act unselfishly, and just so surely as he does that, he opens up the channels of his brain to a greater and greater perception and realization of his own nature. When he reaches a certain point, he is able to perceive that whether the body is awake or asleep or dreaming, or whether the body has passed through the state called death—there is no cessation for him.

Supposing we were able to pass from waking to dreaming, from dreaming to sleeping, from sleeping to death, from death to re-birth in another body—and able to go through all these states and changes without a single break of memory, so that we could not only carry the memory intact from lower to higher states, but bring it through with us from higher to lower states, through every plane, bringing back the knowledge into this or an other body—what would we be? Then we would know just what we are. We would know the relation of this plane to every other. We could read the hearts of men. We could help them to take a greater and higher stand. We should no longer be deluded by the ideas which impel the majority of men. We

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would no longer struggle for place or position. We would struggle only for knowledge, for possessions of every kind in order that we might be the better able to help and teach others. We would sojourn with Deity all the time, whether in a body or out of it.

It is to arouse man to an understanding of his own nature and to the right use of his powers that Theosophy has been brought to him again, as it has been brought in period after period by Those who are greater than we are—Those who have passed through the same stages we are now passing through—our Elder Brothers, the Christs of all times, the Divine Incarnations. It is They who come to remind us of our own natures; to remind us and to arouse us to action, so that what we really are may be known to us and expressed by us here on this lowest physical plane, on which we are working out our destiny—a destiny made by ourselves, a destiny which can only be changed by ourselves, by the very power of that Spirit which we are..

No one can know anything for another. Each one has to know for himself. Each one has to do his own learning. The object of Theosophy is to teach man what he is, to show man what he is, and to present to him the necessity of his knowing for himself. No vicarious atonement, no vicarious transmission of knowledge, is possible. But the direction in which knowledge lies may be pointed out; the steps which will lead us in that direction

may be shown, as can be done only by those who have passed that way before. It is exactly what is being done. It is the course of all Saviors of humanity. It is the doctrine of Krishna, of Buddha, of Jesus, no less than the doctrine of H. P. Blavatsky. The two teachings that the West is most urgently in need of are those of Karma and Reincarnation, the doctrines of hope and responsibility—Karma, the doctrine of responsibility means that whatever a man sows he shall also reap—Reincarnation, the doctrine of hope, means that—whatever he is reaping—there never will be a time when he may not sow better seed. The very fact of suffering is a blessing. Karma and Reincarnation show us that suffering is brought about by wrong thought and action; through our suffering we may be brought to a realization that a

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wrong course has been pursued. We learn through our suffering.

Life is one grand school of Being, and we have come to that stage where it is time for us to learn to understand the purpose of existence; to grasp our whole nature firmly; to use every means in our power in every direction—waking, dreaming, sleeping, or in any other state—to bring the whole of our nature into accord, so that our lower instrument may be in line” and thus more and more fully reflect our divine inner nature.

INSTINCT AND INTUITION

Instinct is a direct perception of what is right, within its own realm. Intuition is a direct cognition of the truth in all things. Reason is, as it were, the balance between instinct and intuition. Animals have right instinct in regard to what to eat, and in regard to what is dangerous to them, for their instinct is acquired experience; but they do not reason in their instincts—they feel them. We reason about both our instincts (for we have some) and our intuitions, and usually reason ourselves into a false position from a false basis of thinking. Reason is an instrument we are working with, but if we start with wrong premises we are bound to come to false conclusions, however faultless the reasoning. Working logically, we can come to right conclusions only with an eternal premise; in no other way shall we ever determine the right in our modes of looking at things.

In trying to understand instinct and intuition, therefore, we shall have to ascertain their true foundation. Certainly, there must be a deep meaning in, and a deep cause for, their existence. Looking upon the animal kingdom and seeing therein actions proceeding for the welfare of the different animal beings, we call those actions on their part instinct, without at all realizing that something produced that instinct. It could not arise of itself. It must have been a production, as all things in this or any universe are productions. The statement of the ancient Wisdom-Religion is that at the root of every being of every grade, of every form and of every kind, there is one reality—Spirit, and Spirit alone. From Spirit have come all productions;

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from Spirit all evolutions have been brought about. The Spirit is the same in all; the acquisition differs in accordance with the degree of progress of the individual or being; for evolutions proceed on individual lines. All beings are of the same nature, but because the thought, the ideal and the action differ, we find in a great universe like ours many kinds of intelligence evolved from the great Root of all evolution—the Spirit in each being.

All beings below man are evolutions each in its own degree. Even in the mineral kingdom there is form, whether that form be of a crystal or an atom; it is a spiritual something with a psychic nature, expressing itself according to its own acquired nature. Crystals have their own particular sympathies and antipathies, their own attractions and repulsions. Are these mechanical? Not in the least. They are inherent instinct—an unerring faculty which is but that spark of the divine lurking in every particle of inorganic matter. If the mineral kingdom did not have a psychic intelligence, man could never use it. The same is true with the vegetable and animal kingdoms, which, each, adds something to the mere psychical intelligence of the mineral kingdom in a limited way. Then, coming to man, we find that he has the power of transcending his conditions, of standing apart from them and looking upon them as a self-conscious being, separate from them, and of an entirely different nature. That which is but a spark of divinity in the lower kingdoms grows to be a flame in the higher beings.

There are seven distinct stages through which all forms come, from nebular matter down to our present concrete formations. Conditioned existence is produced by various kinds of lives in every state of matter—by different acquired intelligences. But Man had a large part in the determination of the processes, of the degrees of descent to be undertaken, and it was according to his knowledge and processes instituted by him, that the state or conditions of the kingdoms below him were made. For Man was a self-conscious being when this earth began. Man stands midway between spirit and what we call matter; he is the turning point of evolution, and on him depends the future of this evolution. Man has both instinct and intuition. Every cell in our bodies is instinctively impelled by us. Whether we are conscious of it or not, that instinct causes them to

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evolve. The lives in our bodies have been trained life after life, until their action is automatic and reflex. The cells of the different organs have their own special impulsations. The cells subtract from food whatever is necessary for the composition of the blood, the bones, the various tissues, and the brain—which, too, is made of the food we eat and is changing all the time, like any other part of the body, being in constant dissociation. But the Real Man is not his body, nor his brain, and it is to the Real Man that intuition pertains.

Both instinct and intuition have been gained in no other way than through observation and experience. All the instinct of animals is a gain in that particular species along the lines of their own growth in intelligence and expression in bodies. So, man's intuition carries with it all the knowledge existing in his real nature. Man has lived lives anterior to this one, not few but many—even on a planet which we inhabited before this earth began, or, rather, before we began with this earth. The many, many experiences gained through many, many lives are still with us. We have never lost them. They are still resident and potentially active in our innermost being—in that real nature of ours which each one of us reaches every twenty-four hours, when the body is asleep, when the dreaming state is passed. There lies intuition—the sum total of all our past experiences. Something comes through occasionally, giving us an inkling of what is the true nature. The voice of the conscience is the outlook of that true nature upon the action which is contemplated. Some people hearing that “voice of the silence” think God is speaking to them, or that some other outside being impresses them. But, in reality, it came from their own inner nature—was born from and drawn from the accumulation of all past wisdom; it was “the voice” of their own spiritual nature.

The channel through which the intuition may flow may be made clear by any and every one of us. In what way? By desiring to perpetuate the personality? Never, in this nor any other world. There must be a recognition of what, in reality, our personality is. It is not the body; it is the ideas held. Ideas make a body a fit vehicle for them; ideas control the action of the body. Our personalities are composed

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of our ideas, our likes and dislikes, our attractions and repulsions, of the little things that we demand for ourselves, that buttress up in us the notion that all this is for me. This is not the Real Man. The personality cannot be retained; whatever the ideas held today, they are not the same as those we held in the past; yet in the past we acted, as now, according to the ideas then entertained. In the future we shall have still other ideas, and will act in accordance with them. It is our thinking which limits our action. It is, then, for us to see that we are real spiritual beings internally, and that it is only the outer—the personality—which needs clarifying. The clearing can come about only by acting for and as the One Self. Then we shall express our real natures clearly in this world of material things; then we shall know what some men only suspect—for intuition is a direct cognition of the truth.

The Message of Theosophy was given us that we may reach into that part of our nature which knows, which notes and knows. This is not an impossible task; for we are not poor miserable sinners, and others have accomplished it. They went this way and tested out for themselves, as is the only true way for everyone. They found it to be absolute fact that all this inner knowledge, or intuition, is recoverable. They know that our ideas, our

thoughts, our modes of thinking, our limited understandings of our natures make our hindrances; they know that neither the body, nor any environment whatever is detrimental, but that every environment is an opportunity—the greater the obstacles, the more hindrances of circumstance, the greater the opportunity. If we could but be wise enough, if we could open our eyes wide enough to see, we could learn something from the various instincts perceived in the kingdoms below us. All those beings are proceeding by instinct on that long, long journey which leads to that place where we now are. If we are wise, by intuition we also will proceed on that small old Path which leads far away—the Path that all the Predecessors of all time have trodden. All the Beings who have appeared in the world as our Elder Brothers—Divine Incarnations—in past civilizations have reached that stage toward which we are now consciously or unconsciously proceeding.

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Our intuition is not so asleep as we think. It is shining in us all the time. If we will only remove the false conceptions which prevent us now from seeing, those of us who are operating on this side of the dark veil can draw that veil aside and let the light shine through.

THE CREATIVE WILL

There is no possible way of understanding or explaining the nature of any being whatever except through Evolution, which is always an unfolding from within outwards, the expression of spirit or consciousness through the intelligence acquired. The will of spirit in action has produced everything that exists.

If we understand that intelligent will lies behind everything that exists, is the cause of everything that is, is the Creator in the universe, we may perhaps gain some idea of what it is necessary for us to know in order properly to use our powers.

All stand as creators in the midst of our creations. There are creators below us in the scale of intelligence. We stand in another place, with a wider range of vision, a greater fund of experience; so, we can see that below us, infinitely below us, are beings so small that many of them could be gathered on the point of a needle. Yet the scientists who have examined them under many conditions cannot deny to these infinitesimal organisms a certain intelligence, an ability to seek what they like and to avoid what they dislike. From the smallest conceivable point of perception and action there is a constantly widening range of expression, of evolution, a development more and more in the direction of a greater range of being. This evolution of intelligence, or soul, proceeds very slowly in the lower kingdoms, more rapidly in the animal kingdom, and in man has reached that stage where the being himself knows that he is, that he is conscious, that he can understand to

some extent his own nature and the natures of the beings below him, and see their relation to each other.

Man has now reached a point where he begins to inquire what more there is for him to know. He has ceased to think exclusively

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of the material; he is sensing his own nature, and he asks, what am I, whence came I, whither do I go?

If we have these ideas, we can perceive that there must have been in the past some amongst men who asked these very questions that we are now asking, and who took the steps that carried them to a higher point of experience and knowledge than we now occupy. It is these very beings, now above us, who form a stratum of consciousness, of knowledge and power, that we have not—men who have passed through the stages we are now in. They are the very ones who come to this earth as Saviors from time to time.

As Christians, we look back to the advent of One such, and think of Him as unique. Yet He came in His time to but one small nation; He said Himself that He came but to the Jews. Do we not know that every civilization and every tribe that ever has existed has held a similar record—that of some great Personage who came amongst them?

Back of all the religions that ever have been, there is the record, the tradition, of some great Personage. And we find an astonishing fact in studying the scriptures and teachings of other days—each of these great Teachers taught the same doctrines. There is no difference between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of Buddha, although those teachings are recorded in different languages and an interval of six hundred years separated the two great Teachers. What is true of these two is like wise true of all the other many Saviors of different times and peoples—they all taught the same fundamental ideas.

This fact suggests that there is a body of Men, of perfected men, product of past civilizations and evolution, our Elder Brothers, in fact, who have acquired and are the Custodians of the knowledge and experience gained through aeons of time. Their knowledge is actually the very Science of Life, for it enters into every department of existence, of nature. They know the natures and processes of the beings below man, and above man, as we know the processes of ordinary every-day experience. This knowledge they have preserved and re-

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corded, and they have the memory of it, just as we have the memory of yesterday's experiences and events.

They have not extended their power to know. We have each of us the same power to know that is theirs. But they have extended the facilities of the instruments which they possess. They have improved what they have. They have better brains. They have better bodies. How did they acquire them? By fulfilling every duty which faced them, regardless of what came to themselves. They thought nothing of acquiring power and knowledge for themselves; they thought only of gaining power that they might expend it for the benefit of every living creature. In so doing they opened the doors to the full play of the power of the Spirit within.

We do the very opposite. We contract the divine power of the Spirit within us to the pin-holes of personal desires and selfishness. Do we not see that? Do we not see that we ourselves stand in the way of the use of the power within us because our ideas are selfish, small, mean?

The great work of evolution proceeds from within outwards. The Soul is the Perceiver; it looks directly on ideas. The action of the will is through ideas. The ideas give the directions. Small ideas, small force; large ideas, large force; the Force itself is illimitable, for it is the force of Spirit, infinite and exhaustless. What we lack are universal ideas. We need to arouse in ourselves that power of perception which will lay the whole field of being open to us. A stream cannot rise higher than its source.

The nature of man can never be understood in the least degree by the ideas and methods which modern psychologists and scientists and popular religions are following. They all proceed from the basis of physical life, many of them from the basis of one life only. They tabulate experiences of many kinds, without any firm basis upon which to fix their thought, their reason, and so never arrive at any definite conclusion or real knowledge of what man is, or of the powers that he may exhibit. This is their use of the creative power, but it is a limited use, a misuse. Those who follow that way usually have some selfish purpose at the base of their desire, something they wish

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to achieve for themselves, some benefit they desire for themselves. This is not the way. Theosophy says that if the desire or aspiration is unselfish, noble, universal, then the force which flows through the individual is grand, noble, universal in its character. Further, that every human being has in him the same elements, the same possibilities, as any other, even the noblest and highest beings in this or any solar system. This puts man in quite a different position from where our religions, our science, or our philosophy of the West place him. They all treat of man as if he were his body or his mind, as if he were the creature and not the creator.

The body changes; we change our minds; but there is a Something in us which does not change, which does not depend on change, whether of body, mind or circumstances, but

which is the creator, the ruler, the experiencer of all changes of every kind. It is this portion of our nature—the real Man within us— that we need to know the nature of. If we can reach such a point of perception that we can grasp the fact of the Spirit within us, we shall have reached a point where a knowledge of ourselves is possible; and if a knowledge of ourselves, then a knowledge through that of all other beings whatsoever.

The great Teachers point to the fact that the real basis of man's nature is Divinity, Spirit, God. Deity is not some other being, however great. It is not something outside. It is the very highest in ourselves and in all others. That is the God, and all that any man may know of this Spirit is what he knows in himself, of himself, through himself. This is the idea that all the ancients put forward in saying there is but one Self, and that we are to see the Self in all things and all things in the Self. That is what we all do to some extent; we see the Self, more or less. Nothing is seen outside ourselves; everything that we see or know is within ourselves. But we think of the Self in us as mortal, perishable, having no existence apart from this body and this mind, and as separate from the Self in all other forms.

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If we had within us and behind us all the power that there is in the universe, and we had no channel through which that power could flow—or only a narrow, twisted, distorted channel— that great Power would be of no use to us. would be non-existent to us. To open up the channel it is necessary for us to understand the real basis: The God within, immortal and eternal, the Source of all being, our very selves; second, that all action proceeds from that Source and Center of our being and of all being. Then who is the constructor of all? How was all this evolution brought about? All the beings involved in it make up both the world and its inhabitants; all that exists is Self-produced, Self-evolved—the creation of Spiritual beings acting in, on, and through each other. The whole force of evolution, and the whole power behind it, is the human will, so far as humanity is concerned. We do not realize that every form occupied by any being is composed of Lives, each undergoing evolution on its own account, aided, impelled or hindered by the force of the higher form of consciousness that evolved it. For this universe is embodied Consciousness, or Spirit. And just as a single drop of water contains within it every element and characteristic of the whole ocean, so each being, however low in the degree of its intelligence, contains within itself the potentiality and possibilities of the highest. The will of the Spirit in action has produced all.

The great Message of Theosophy has provided for every interested enquirer the means by which he may know the truth about himself and nature. Just as the Elder Brothers have provided in the past, so They have again in our day. Everything that Humanity needs has been given to us. But can you give to anyone what he does not Want? Can you cause to enter into the mind of another what that mind will not receive?

There has to be an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, before there is any hope for us. As long as we are self-centered, as long as we are satisfied with what we know and what we have, this great Message is not for us. It is for the hungry, for the weary, for those who are desirous of knowledge, for those who see the absolute paucity of what has been put before us

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as knowledge by those who style themselves our teachers, for those who find no explanation anywhere of the mysteries that surround us, who do not know themselves, who do not understand themselves. For them there is a way; for them there is food in abundance; for them this whole Movement is kept in being by one single will, the Will of the Elder Brothers who have carried these great eternal truths through good and evil in order that mankind may be benefited; not desiring any reward, not desiring any recognition, desiring only that Their fellow men, Their younger brothers, may know, may realize what They know.

MAN, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

“There are two kinds of beings in the world, the one divisible, and the other indivisible: the divisible is all things and the creatures, the indivisible is called Kutastha, or he who standeth on high unaffected. But there is another spirit designated as the Supreme Spirit—Paramatma—which permeates and sustains the three worlds.”—Bhagavad-Gita.

In considering these statements, our immediate tendency is to make a separateness—a division—in our minds; but to understand nature at all, to understand ourselves at all, we may not make any such division. Both the divisible and the indivisible, and the Supreme Spirit, exist within each and every being. The “three worlds” exist in the nature of man as a being. Man, “visible and invisible,” is Man, “divisible and indivisible.” There are different classes of visible beings, as well as different classes of invisible beings, but whatever we may know of those different classes must come from a perception within ourselves. For that perception, however high, there is no stoppage anywhere; it may reach to the utmost confines of space. The power in each one is the Supreme Spirit.

When we look at a human being with our physical eyes, we are able to see only the form; when we listen to the speech of a human being, we are able to understand only the sounds that we hear, or the

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ideas that the words convey. We cannot tell just what a human being is, just what his possibilities are, or what knowledge is his, either by looking at him or by hearing him speak. We may know this or that presentment, or the various circumstances under which we came in contact; we may gain ideas from those contacts; but to know one through and

through, root and branch, is not given to any mere physical thinker. So, there is in the human being that which is invisible—that power of perception and expression of which we sense only a part. That invisible part of man has never been fathomed, though it exists in all of us, and from it all that is visible has sprung.

Spirit is invisible, yet can we think of a place where Spirit is not? Spirit is everywhere, in everything, the cause, the sustainer, of all that was, is, or ever shall be. Spirit is not outside of us; the same Spirit is in all; whatever differences we may be able to perceive in any other are not differences of Spirit, but differences in range of perception. All our powers rest upon that One Spiritual Nature. The limitations placed upon the power to express are not made by any external force whatever, but made by ourselves, by the ideas that we hold. Our range of perception is governed by the ideas we hold in regard to ourselves, our nature, and the life about us. These ideas that control our physical lives and our minds are, in fact, the limitations in ourselves; yet, however varied, however high, however low they may be, their very permanency rests on the Spirit itself and every one of them springs from perceptions of Spirit. Truth and error both spring from perceptions of Spirit, and by the very power of Spirit are sustained. Ideas rule actions, and, as ideas have, like actions, their cycle of return, so we create a vicious cycle in which we become involved, from the one single fact that we constantly identify ourselves with this, that, or the other condition. But this very power of self-identification is from Spirit.

Visible man—his body, his physical instrument—alone is a growth from below upwards. The physical body is merely the shell of the man, made of matter of the earth, from the three lower kingdoms—mineral, vegetable, and animal—and is being constantly renewed from day to day, constantly worn out from day to day. Man,

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himself, is that invisible power and entity which inhabits the body, which is the cause of its present construction and development from lower forms of consciousness. Man, himself, is above all physicality. From the physical point of view, man, himself, is absolutely invisible. He is that which acts. No form may restrain him. No form can in any real sense contain him. Any form may be the focus from which he may and can act.

The Real Teaching is that the man himself, as spiritual being, descends from the plane of spirituality, or spiritual self-consciousness, step by step, through all the stages of condensation of matter; that he meets the uprising tide of form from the lower kingdoms, and when the most perfect form of all has been brought to its highest stage of development, he enters it. Not until the invisible man enters the physical instrument, could there be humanity at all. So, we, as human beings, are the product of the higher Divine Spirit, of all the knowledge of a past immensity of time, and also, of all that lies in the lower kingdoms, which constitutes our lower nature.

Man's higher nature is not divisible. It is constant, eternal and true. The lower nature is impermanent and changing, but the invisible man within is the one who makes the changes, who forces on the changes, and who gathers experience and knowledge through them. There is no static condition for any instrument whatever in all the kingdoms, in all the worlds and in all systems. Never-ceasing motion, the power to move on and on, in greater and greater ranges of perception, is the birth-right of every human being. We are like the one who went out from his father's house and dwelt among the swine and fed upon husks. The time must come for us to say, like the prodigal son, 'will arise and return to my Father'—I will arise and resume my own real place in Nature; using all the instruments that I have, I will work to the end that all beings may share in all knowledge, that they may progress in a consecutive range of steps, ever on and upward, without the breaks and obstacles that a false conception of our nature brings about. Such is the whole object of the ancient Wisdom Religion—that man may resume his own birthright. No being or beings of any grade can confer upon man the knowledge

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that he alone can get. That knowledge is all in reserve in the invisible part of his nature, the result of every experience of all his immense past; it is right with him, although he has made his physical instrument of such a nature that it will not register what he, as the real being—the invisible man—knows.

Man, the invisible being, eternally is; for him there is never for an instant cessation of consciousness. The curtain rings down on one scene to immediately rise on another. When the body is at rest, the man is still acting and thinking, in another way, in a finer form, on planes not so restricted as is the physical plane. There he has freedom. There he sees and feels and hears and speaks and acts (as he does on the physical plane) but he can be here, there or elsewhere, wherever his thought brings him, wherever his desire is; he can move freely and unhampered by gross physical material. The power of perception of all kinds of substance, and of all kinds of beings is the power of everyone of us, but that power to see lies behind the physical eye; it belongs to the eye within—the eye of the soul.

How shall we recognize that power? By acting from the basis of our eternal, divine nature; by assuming our own identity; by ceasing to place dependence on any philosophy, on any science, or religion, or any statement whatever; by depending on the reality of the inner, true, spiritual man; by clarifying our mental conceptions; by thinking right thoughts and by acting in accordance with them. In that way, every channel in the body becomes open to what goes on when, as spiritual beings, we leave the physical instrument at night, and are active on the inner, spiritual planes of being. Each and every human being must open up those channels on his higher nature for himself. He must know for himself, and the only place where he may know is within himself. Each one, in

reality, stands at the center of the universe, and all the rest are pictures and sounds and experiences, in which he may see the play of spirit.

How may we obtain a resumption of divinity? It cannot be obtained by much speaking, nor by argument. It can be obtained only by taking the position. Always we act in accordance with the

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position assumed. So, let us take the highest position, the position that is shown by everything in nature. The highest of the high is ours. We must assume that high position. We must affirm it. How else can we gain a knowledge of immortality than by taking the position of immortality? We assume and act in accord with the position of wickedness very easily. If we take the high position, we not only act in accordance with the greatness of the position taken, but we come to a realization of it within ourselves, where is all perception of it, all fulfillment of it.

What knowledge could we have of immortality from the point of view of mortality? What idea of perfection could we get from the basis of imperfection? None but a faulty one. The highest idea on that basis would merely be less imperfection. Real perfection does not mean a relative perfection; it means an intimate knowledge of the essential basis of everything that exists in nature. True spirituality is not a hazy condition; not a mere existence without action; but the power to know and to do, to have what the ancients called 'all-knowingness.' When we reach "all-knowingness" then are we truly divine—divine in knowledge, divine in power, acting through every conceivable state of matter, and through every conceivable instrument. And that is our great destiny. Just let us seize it. Life is ours. Spirit is ours. Consciousness is ours. Eternal existence is ours. Just let us take it.

The greatest of all knowledge does exist. All the experience of the past, all the civilizations that ever have been, have produced beings who now are the custodians of all the knowledge that has been gained. That knowledge is waiting for us as soon as we shall take the necessary steps to fit ourselves to become the possessors of it. That knowledge includes all intellectual knowledge, all spiritual knowledge, and all knowledge of every force in nature. Great and powerful as are some forces that we know of now, there are forces to be known that far transcend them all. The power to destroy a world is reachable by the one who takes the right step; but the one who takes the right step will never destroy. He will only build. He will

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use all the power that he has to construct a path on which humanity may travel the way that he has gone.

If, then, we all think of ourselves as eternal invisible beings, acting through visible impermanent instruments, we shall get a better and truer conception of life; and if we will try to reach inward to the innermost part of our heart of hearts, we shall find a greater vision ours—a power to perceive in wider ranges, to greater depth, with more effect than can ever be gained by our physical organs of sight. As one of our Great Teachers said, “All nature is before you; take what you can.” It is for each one to listen, to learn, to apply.

RENUNCIATION OF ACTION

It would be a grave mistake to think that by not acting one frees himself from the consequences of action. Such would be a totally false view of the “renunciation of action.” The whole universe is action. First, last, and all the time ceaseless motion lies behind everything that is. Among all creatures the impulse to move on—to progress—is action, and it comes from the very nature of Spirit itself; it cannot be denied. Nor can one, even if he should think so, ever cease from action, in not doing that which ought to be done; for there is action in the very thought—thought being the real plane of action and that which induces any kind of action. Without action there is no manifested life. While we live, we are constantly acting. There is not a moment when action ceases, whether the action is through a mind in a body, or after the terrestrial mind and body are laid aside for the time being and functioning goes on in inner instruments and sheaths of the soul.

Motion is the basis of man’s physical existence. There is not one atom, not one molecule in the body, which is not in constant motion, and it is through that constant motion that the body is enabled to register the various diff effects presented by physical matter itself. But within the body is that which gives direction—the mind—or that bundle of ideas which each one has. In the last analysis, it comes home to each individual that he himself is his own judge, jury

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and executioner; for, if his ideas are small and concerned only with physical existence, then the motion given is in a wrong direction, personal and physical. If, however, we realize that such ideas as we have accepted and made a basis for our action may not be true, we can change and enlarge them, or reject them altogether. Who, then, are WE, having the power behind both body and mind to arouse change?

We are the real mover behind the ideas and behind the will—the Experiencer—Spirit itself—that which looks out through our eyes and that which senses through our organs. It is the same Self in each and every instrument. Spirit has the faculty of identifying itself with the business upon which the mind is concentrated, so that it becomes involved in its instruments and confused by its involution. Although we are Spirit—divine, eternal, beginningless, endless—we have created right or wrong ideas as to our own natures, as

to anything and everything which we experience in any direction, upon any plane of being. We are the One Reality behind all experiences, behind all planes of being—which are but temporary in their nature, while Man himself, divested of every means of communication with them, becomes creator of his own means. Within the spiritual nature lie every possible power, force and means for the creation of a more and more perfect instrument, yet, by our own actions, by our own creation of false ideals as their basis, we have made the conditions in which we find ourselves.

We could get beyond the troubles by which we are affected, if we would cease to deal in every case with effects. We are constantly in a sea of effects, and we try to relate one effect to another without for one moment going back to the basis of causation—to the Self, the Spirit within. In the Spirit, no one of us differs—no human being, nor any kind of being—whether above man, man, or below man. The One Spirit in all is the perceiving power. It is the executing power. It is the creative, the preservative and the regenerative power in every being. Outside of us lies nothing but perception, but within us lies the power of realization of Spirit itself and of the powers which lie within that Spirit. Our differences lie in our spiritual advancement

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and in our discriminative knowledge, according to our self-evolved nature of mind and body—an evolution which always takes place under law, under the same law ruling from the minutest life to the highest spiritual being—that inherent law which is the power to act. Action is merely the execution of that spiritual law.

We are learning all the time because we are acting all the time. In every fresh combination, the understanding and proper use of it points us onward and enables us to go still further into higher worlds and wider combinations. Each one of us is a sensitive instrument—the embodiment of everything there is in the whole of nature; for we have evolved from instruments of homogeneous substance more concrete instruments and we move in them, as spiritual beings from an immense past, to make all possible differentiations and combinations to be obtained in our evolutionary stream. And let us not forget that we were concerned not only with the beings above us and those of our own high estate when we began this evolution, but with all the beings below us in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. All are interdependent. It can only be when we realize our own natures and act in accordance with them that we shall fulfill the purpose of our life here, which, in fact, includes every being of every kind anywhere. We act upon them all to some degree in every thought and action of our own, and just as we affect them so the effect flows back upon us through beings like us, and beings above us and below us. So, the whole course of understanding—the proper ideas from which to act—lies within our selves and not outside.

To imagine that we are here by chance, that there is no law, that there are accidents, that we are not responsible for ourselves being impinged upon while others are gratified of their desires—is an error. We have brought ourselves into the present condition by doing similar things before. We have in other lives pursued a course that shut us out from a knowledge of our own nature. We have so acted through the inherent power within ourselves as to bring about a closure between our high perception and our lives in the body; we have affected others in a similar way, and they in their turn come back to affect us and keep us on that plane of thought and action. For it can be seen

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that our thoughts are action more than the acts themselves. It is the way we think that produces action, and others are permeable to these thoughts of ours, be they good or bad.

There is the faculty in man of identifying himself with whatever condition he finds himself in—the faculty, called in The Bhagavad-Gita Ahankara, or egotism. As soon as we are involved in any set of circumstances—be it happiness or misery—we immediately identify ourselves with the prevailing condition, forgetting that there were other conditions before and that there will be other conditions in the future with which we may again identify ourselves, if we have not learned to do otherwise. So we go on thinking that we are this body, that we are this nation, these events, and this period of time. All these ideas are subversive of an understanding of our true natures, but they are eradicable, because we ourselves created and maintain them.

A true understanding may be had by no matter whom or where through what is known in one of the ancient writings—the Mundaka-Upanishad”—as the shaving process. It is the elimination of all that is not the Self. For nothing that we can see is Self; nothing that we can hear, or smell, or taste, or know is Self. The Self senses all, through its instruments, but is not any of these things. Nor are we any of the experiences we have ‘had, are now having, or will have. We are that which experiences, and are not any of the changes. We are none of the processes through which we go every day, from sleeping to waking, or from life to death, according to universal law. ‘WE never sleep; WE never die. Sleep is just the reaction of the body, and when the body sleeps, WE are still thinking and perceiving and experiencing, in the dreaming state, and in deep sleep states beyond, where we have full spiritual self-consciousness.

Why do we bring back so little memory of the action of consciousness during deep sleep? Because our registering apparatus is of a small calibre. The physical brain which is the register of our thinking—our manipulating instrument here—like every-thing else in our bodies is formed from food, and so is constantly changing as our impressions change. It becomes receptive only to the constant influence

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of our earthly thinking. But, if while awake, we take a spiritual basis for our thinking—that which compels us in right action, with the recognition of all men coming from the same source and proceeding toward the same goal, though the path varies with the pilgrim—thinking and acting on that basis during our daily lives, then the brain will become responsive to those other forms of consciousness during the sleep of the body; then, all that we know on the high planes of being can be carried through and to a great degree expressed in the body.

In all processes something of change is going on. So, action from the highest basis of thought institutes an action in the body itself and changes the very nature of the lives in our bodies, making them porous to the inner side of nature so that they finally become translucent, and permeable to all higher and finer influences. There is the higher and inner side of any and every form that exists—mineral, vegetable, animal, human or beyond the human—and as we become more universal in our modes of thinking and of action, we contact more fully that higher, inner side. We raise ourselves higher, and we see the world as quite different from the one perceived when we were treading the path of mere terrestrial existence. 'We see what all false modes of thought and action have brought about- animosities, wars, divisions between individuals, pestilences, disease, cyclones and earthquakes, noxious insects and animals.

The great errors of mental conception which darken man's mind keep him as an ever-acting being creating the conditions which bring him his sorrows and disabilities. If there were no human being in the world who would ever harm another, there would be no harm. All harmful things would disappear. But even though there be harmful beings, and their nature cannot be changed, we can so change our own attitude that no harm can come to us from them. If harm comes to us, there must be harm in us. The Yogi of the East can go into the midst of all kinds of harmful creatures unharmed, because of his own harmlessness. When our thought is fixed on false ideas, it is apparent to the harmful creatures, and their instinct of so-called self-preservation moves them to attack us, because they recognize

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a danger in us. The natures of those beings below us will be changed only by man, for they cannot change themselves. It is the lives which we are using in our own bodies—themselves motion, action—which become the embodiment of beings in the various kingdoms, because we have endowed them with our thought and action and given them direction, as each moment passes, back on to their own plane. We are their creators and their providence, or we delay their progress by misunderstanding our own natures and, consequently, theirs.

What will be in the future depends upon those who have the power to act in any state of matter. The civilization that now is has been created by ourselves, but behind all true

progress there must be a universal conception of Spirit, mind, and action. Let us dismiss any idea of renunciation of action. Act always. We have to act. Every principle of our nature compels us to act. If we fear or fail to act in any given place where the situation calls for action, then we have acted in a wrong way, for we have missed an opportunity. And an error of omission is worse than an error of commission. Act, then, but act for and as the Self of all creatures. Renounce not action, but selfish interest in every thought and act.

THE LAW OF CORRESPONDENCES

“Law of Correspondences” is a greater subject than people are liable to suspect; yet we all know something of correspondences in the simple facts of nature—the seven colors of the spectrum, the seven notes of the scale. Each color of each octave corresponds to the same color of another octave. We see only a certain number of rates of vibration, but above the number perceptible to us are those too fine for us to perceive with our physical senses, and, also below, are vibrations too coarse for our perception. ‘We stand in the middle, as it were, of a great range of perceptions, aware of only a portion of the universe in which we live. The same is true with regard to sounds—from the note *do* up to *Si*; *do* corresponds to every other *do* in the seven octaves which we are able to perceive physically; but these seven octaves are merely a portion of all the great octaves of nature

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above us and below us. There is correspondence between the high and the low throughout all nature, because the great Center of Life, of Consciousness, of Perception is the same in every being of whatever grade; and because from within that Center proceeds all action. The use of the power to act which is inherent in that Center is the cause of all manifestation.

All things which are visible come from the invisible. In the evolution of a planet there is a beginning in homogeneous, radiant matter—such as composes the Milky Way—the basis of all subsequent forms that are brought about, or produced, by the being’s existent in that homogeneous state. Each being is a Center and each Center is the same as the One Great Center. Proceeding from the same Source, necessarily, all beings proceed under the same laws. The same Law rules all beings. The power to act and the subsequent reaction—the law of laws which we know as Karma—is brought into operation by all beings to produce the manifested universe and all the differentiations in forms and substance. Thus, there is a connection between each being and every other being. There is a correspondence between each being and every other being. There is a correspondence between the constituents of each being and the constituents of every other being.

The law which rules the atoms of our world as well as the highest spiritual beings in it—that law inherent in the Center of each being—proceeds in a definite, orderly mode. This

progress is known to be divided into seven degrees, or the septenary nature, from the states of fine matter down to the matter that we now know in the body. All beings go through forms in the various states, and not only do they go through them but they possess them at the present time. Man possesses everybody whichever has existed for him in any stage of matter. But our planet is one of many planets. It exists in a solar system which is one of many solar systems. There are inhabitants of other planets—some of them below us in point of development and others so much higher than we that if we knew the state of their progress, we would esteem them divine beings. All beings of each and every planet are of the same Center and proceed under the same

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universal law of manifestation. Thus, there is a correspondence between each and every planet: we are related to Mars, to Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn and the Moon by certain correspondences in fact, there are organs in our bodies which correspond to the various planets.

At the root of all these correspondences with planets, beings and states of matter, and behind all these points of attachment with everything—the most minute as well as the coarsest—lies a tremendous, almost immeasurable SCIENCE related to all portions of the universe, to every state of matter and every plane of consciousness—a science which by our self-induced and self-devised efforts it is possible for us to attain it ourselves. For knowledge does not exist outside of us, nor does knowledge exist without the knowers of it. Always the knowers of the greater knowledge have achieved it through observation and experience. Those Beings who are greater than we are and who have handed down to us Theosophy—the science of life and the art of living—in the far distant past had to go through similar experiences to those we are now encountering. So again we see there is a correspondence in ourselves with those higher Beings, and, as well, with lower beings. We have to manifest as various classes of beings, some on higher planes and some on lower planes. The forms of the kingdoms below us are embodiments of minor grades of consciousness on their way up to our estate, which they will reach when we have progressed to still higher states, under the law of evolution. For evolution of form is always brought about by the extension of the Consciousness of the being in habiting the form, and our own purpose, as spiritual beings connected with all states of matter, is to evolve a better and better instrument on this plane of being to correspond to, or be accessible to, those inner states of being and higher planes of consciousness which we all in reality possess.

It may seem strange to us that we possess what we know nothing of, and that there are powers latent in us which in our present case we are unable to manifest. But we ought to see that we have the power to learn. We have the power to learn sciences of various kinds, or languages entirely different from those we now know. The power

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to learn is within us. We could not learn these things if they were new—that is, due to some formation of nature separate from ourselves. There is a power that we may gain over all nature, and use, for in fact nothing is of use by way of knowledge that cannot be practical for the true evolution of man, for the forwarding of humanity. There is a certain knowledge in the possession of some which relates to the occult sciences, to powers which we do not presently possess but which are latent in us—the reason for either latency or possession lying in the fact that this life is the reaping of what has gone on before. As day succeeds day and life succeeds life, as planet succeeds planet and solar system succeeds solar system, so we have come down through the immeasurable past to the present conditions—to conditions, let it be remembered, where spirit and matter conjoin, where man may become higher than any being in our solar system because he is conjoined with the lower kingdoms; because he may so increase his knowledge in connection with those lower kingdoms that lie may raise them up and use the powers that exist there and are produced by beings of every grade. Let us remember, too, that even on this physical plane there are beings other than those we ordinarily see in mineral, vegetable, animal and human embodiments; there are invisible beings existing in what we call our air, in the ether, in electricity, in fire—for it is life everywhere in this universe; there is not a hand's breadth of vacant 'dead" space anywhere.

However, minute, visible or invisible, the forms of life may be, they are Centers of Consciousness, beginnings of perception, the beginnings of individuality—ever increasing from form to form until the human form is reached, and then, on and on. For we as human beings are not the product of this earth. Our bodies are; but as spiritual beings we were present before this earth was formed. Once more we have come down through the stairway of the seven worlds from that primal state which is the very Center of being, plus all that we had gained before in other worlds. 'We bring with us all that we have gained in similar states and planes of substance before, and go on with the world in each stage, just as we go on from day to day with

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our various occupations. Thus, we may see that there is a continuity throughout the entire course of evolution; what we have to learn is that knowledge of it along the line of true correspondences will never be acquired by mere study, nor by information given us by any being or beings whatever.

True knowledge has to be gained through an increasing perception of the universality of all law and the universal line of progress for every being of whatever grade. We have to think and practise altruism before the higher and more recondite powers of the universe can be placed in our possession for our use. The thought and the motive must be that which makes for the good of all beings. What has been given to us in the philosophy of

Theosophy is for the purpose of arousing the attention of that Center within us which can see, which can know and which can do, when it resumes its own nature and status. For there is a deep knowledge of all these things in the soul of every human being and the soul knows what it needs; it can understand when the brain cannot understand; it can feel when the senses are not capable of transmitting feeling. This knowledge is open to every human being; but only when the mind that we now possess is in exact accord with the nature of the indwelling Spirit, shall we begin to see, from within outwards, all the lines of correspondence and relation that exist between us and all other beings. Only when we realize that we are a part of the Great Chain of being, that no one of us is unnecessary and no one can drop out, that the development is one for all, that we are all from the same Source and going towards the same goal; only when we shall think and act from that basis, will we move onward with the great force proceeding from the Center in that true direction which leads to enlightenment and power.

The law of correspondences constitutes a science which is perhaps beyond the idea of any one of us. Can we realize that—all beings are forces and all forces proceed from beings? Can we realize that there are forces or beings in nature which can be moved without the lifting of a finger—just by the thought, just by the will of one who knows the law of correspondences? Fortunate, indeed, it is that

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men as they are now constituted, with the wrong ideas that rule their actions, do not possess these powers which they could use against their fellow men! For is it not true that if we had them, we would use them to blot out of existence many human beings who are running counter to our own ideas? And those beings are, just like ourselves, controlled by ideas foreign to the true progress of the whole and must meet the exact results of their wrong course of thought. Even without knowing it, perhaps, we may fight the battle of humanity merely by taking one idea of Theosophy—one universal idea—towards the freedom of the soul, and holding to that help. But we have to go much farther than that, which is but one step on the way. We have to realize within ourselves the kind of bodies, inner and outer, which we possess and the powers that belong to those bodies. We must bring those higher powers into operation through this physical body. We must build a higher and greater civilization than ever yet has existed. Whether it is accomplished in this or in ten million lives, whether we go straight to the goal or through suffering after suffering, it must ultimately be brought about.

We are here for a great purpose. A great mission lies before every one of us, as well as a great knowledge. We are here as knowing, self-conscious beings, buried in, and identified with this body, with this matter. Involved in the very work we had to do on this plane of being, we have forgotten our own true natures. It behooves us to understand what our true nature is and to think and act in accordance with it. Let us remember, too, that “the

true nature" is not far away; it is right within us — within our hearts. In the silence of our own hearts there pulsates that One Life, which beats in correspondence in the action of the lungs, the action of the tides, the flux and reflux which is going on all the time and everywhere in nature. Can we not see that the laws of correspondences are the same now that they were millions of years ago? Nor has humanity changed. We have changed the conditions surrounding us, but we ourselves are experiencing the same desires, the same feelings, the same stupidities which were our millions of years ago. We have not advanced spiritually beyond the civilizations that are dead and gone, but in what we call

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"advancement" we have made merely another closer bond to physical existence. So, there is much for us to do.

We move from death to death until we realize our true natures and take the course pointed out by the Wise Men of all ages — the course by which They gained Their wisdom. Theosophy was brought into the world to wake up the souls who are in the least degree susceptible to an awakening, to join that body of pilgrims moving on their way with their faces turned in the direction of the Masters of Wisdom, regardless of their present conditions, quickly or slowly clearing away their defects that they may be the pioneers and helpers and guides of the humanities that are to follow. Moving on with courage and confidence in the Great Beings, they gradually learn and come to a resumption of those powers which we all possess but do not express. Nor can one express in words the power, the happiness, the freedom from fear of any kind, the realization, while in a body, of immortality which spiritual knowledge brings. This knowledge and these powers are within the reach of all of us. As the ancients said, "The Great Self shines in all beings, but in all it does not shine forth." We may reach that One Self, the One Spirit, whence come all law, all possibilities — which has the power to produce all changes, but of itself changes not at all — ever the experiencer, the enjoyer or the sufferer of the changes. Power comes from this knowledge, which springs up spontaneously within us because it resides in the innermost parts of our natures.

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION

Concentration, or the use of the attention in the direction of anything that we wish to do, consistently and persistently, has long been recognized as the most effective means of arriving at the full expression of our powers and energies. The ancients called the power to focus the attention upon a subject or object for as long a time as is required, to the exclusion of every other thought and feeling, 'one-pointedness.' Concentration is difficult to obtain among us as a people, because the key-note of our civilization is, in fact, distraction

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rather than concentration. Constantly and in every direction, we are having presented to our mind's objects and subjects—one thing after another to take our attention and then to pull it off from what we are putting it on. So, our minds have acquired the tendency to jump from one thing to another; to fly to a pleasant idea or to an unpleasant idea, to remain passive. Remaining passive is normally sleep; abnormally, its tendency is towards insanity. That we have become habituated to these distractions and are not able to place our minds on any given thing for any length of time may be easily proved by anyone. If he will sit down and try to think of one single thing, one single object or subject, for only five minutes, he will find even in a very few seconds, perhaps, that he has wandered miles away mentally from the thing he intended to place his mind upon.

We have first to understand what man is, his real nature, what the cause of his present condition, before we can arrive at any pure and true concentration, before we can use the higher mind and the powers that flow from it. For the powers that we use in the body are *transmitted powers*, drawn, indeed, from our inner spiritual nature, but so disturbed and limited that they are not powerful. We need to know about our minds, and we need to control our minds—that is, the lower mind, occupied with personal and physical things, known in Theosophical phraseology, as Lower Manas. It is this “organ,” the thinking principle, which the ancients said is the great producer of illusion—the great distracter of concentration. For there is no possibility of obtaining real concentration until the possessor of the mind can place it where he will, when he will, and for as long a time as he pleases.

It is written in *The Voice of the Silence*: ‘Mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the Slayer.’ The disciple, who is the Real Man—the spiritual man—has to act as such. He has to stop the switchings and fittings of his thinking principle and become calm in that knowledge to which the consideration of his own true nature brings him. The object of all advancement is the realization of the true nature of each one and an employment of the powers which belong to it. What hinders is the thinking principle. We are

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the thinkers, but we are not what we think. If we think wrongly, then all the results of our thoughts and actions must lead to a wrong conclusion, or to a partial one, at best; but if we realize that we are the thinker, and the creator—the evolver of all the conditions through which we have been, in which we now are, and in which we shall find ourselves in the future—then we have reached the point of view of the Real man, and it is only to the Real man that the power of concentration belongs.

Again, in order to obtain concentration, we need an understanding of the classification of the principles of man. We all have the same principles, the same kinds of substances within us, the same spirit within us. We all contain every element that exists anywhere or in any being. So, too, each one has all the powers that exist anywhere, in himself, though latent. We are all of the same Source, all parts of one great Whole, all sparks and rays from the Infinite Spirit, or the Absolute Principle. The second principle is Buddhi, or the acquired wisdom of past lives, as well as this one. It is the cream of all our past experiences. The next principle is Manas, the Higher mind, the real power to think, the creator—not concerned with this physical phase of existence, but with the spirit and the acquired wisdom. These three principles together make the Real Man—Atma Buddhi-Manas—and these three each one of us is in his inner nature.

Our Lower Manas is the transitory aspect of the Higher mind; that is, the portion of our attention, our thoughts and feelings addressed to life in a body. But if our thinking faculty is concerned only with the personal self—only with the body—the powers which reside in the Triad, the Real man, and the acquired wisdom of the past, cannot force themselves through that cloud of illusion. Lower Manas is the principle of balance. It is the place from which the man in a body either goes up towards his higher nature or down towards his earthly nature, made up of the desires pertaining to sensuous existence. Life about us is throwing its impressions and energies upon us all the time. We are constantly subject to them and connected with them by our ideas, our feelings and emotions, so that there is

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a constant turmoil going on within that inner mind which makes a barrier to absolute calmness and concentration.

Then we have the astral body, itself an aspect of the real inner body which has lasted through the vast period of the past and must continue through the far distant future. This astral body is the prototype, or design, around which the physical body is built, and which, considered from the point of view of the powers, is the real physical body. Without it the physical body would be nothing but a mass of matter—an aggregation of smaller lives. It is the astral body which contains the organs, or centers from which the organs have been evolved in accord with the needs of the thinker within. The real senses of man are not in the physical but in the astral body. The astral body lasts a little over one lifetime. It does not die when the physical body dies, but is used as a body in the immediate after-death states.

Now as soon as we begin to make the effort to control the mind, and desire to know and to assume the position of the inner man, the effort and the assumption bring an accession of power and of steadiness. We have started something going in the astral body. What were before merely centers of force around which organs were builded now tend to

become separate astral organs. A gradual building of those organs goes on within us, until in the completion of our effort we have an astral body, with all the organs of the physical completely synthesized, and we are beyond the vicissitudes of physical existence; we have the power of the action of the astral body. The astral body is even more complete and effective on its own plane than our bodily instrument here on the physical plane, for it has a wider range of action in its seven super-senses, where physically we have use of only five senses.

Many hindrances arise, however, as soon as the effort is begun. Old habits of thought and feeling press us on every hand, because we have not yet been able to check our responsiveness to them, and so we find ourselves subject to certain feelings and emotions which tend to destroy that astral body which is being built. First, and most potent, is anger. Anger has an explosive effect, and no matter how

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much we may have progressed in our growth, the uncontrollable inner shock coming from anger will tear that inner body to pieces so that the work has to be done all over again. Next to contend with is vanity—vanity of some kind or another, of some accomplishment, of ourselves, our family, our nation, or what not. Vanity tends to grow and grow, until finally we will not listen to anybody and are too vain to learn anything. So, vanity tends to disintegrate this inner body, although it is less disruptive than anger. Envy is another hindrance. Fear is another, but fear is the least of them all because it can be destroyed by knowledge. Fear is always the child of ignorance. We fear those things we do not know, but when we know, we do not fear.

We are all a prey to those fears that tend to disrupt the very instrument by means of which true concentration may be attained; but it may be attained. The peculiar power and nature of concentration is that, when complete, the attention can be placed on any subject or object to the exclusion of every other for any given length of time; and this thinking principle—this mind of ours which has been flitting about—can be used to shape itself to the object gazed upon, to the nature of the subject thought about. While the mind takes the shape of the object, we get from that shape the form, the characteristics of every kind that flow from it; and when our inquiry is complete, we are able to know everything that can be known of the subject or object. Such a height of concentration we can easily see is not to be attained by intermittent efforts, but by efforts made from “a firm position assumed” with the end in view. All efforts made from that basis are bound to be of avail; every effort made from the point of view of the spiritual man counts, because it makes the body subservient to the thinking principle.

Other things come about from that true power of concentration. We begin to open up the channels that reach from our brains to the astral body, and from the astral body to the inner man. Then, that which is temporary tends to become a part of that which is eternal.

All the planes become synthesized from above down, and all the vestures of the soul which we have evolved from the past become in

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accord with each other. It is just like the tumblers in a lock: when they work together, the lock works accurately. So, we have to bring all the sheaths of the soul into exact accord, and that we can do only by taking the position of the spiritual being and acting as such.

The height of concentration is possible to us, but not on a selfish basis. The concentration of the brain mind stands beside true concentration as a rush light beside the sun. True concentration is, first of all, a position assumed out of regard for the end in view of union with the Higher Self. That is the highest Yoga. Concentration upon the Self is true concentration. And concentration must be attained before we can ever reach that stage where eternal knowledge of every kind is ours to the last degree; before we shall once more resume and wield those powers, which are the heritage of all.

MENTAL HEALING AND HYPNOSIS

Mental healing, metaphysical healing, mind cure, spiritual healing and Christian Science all come under the same head; there is no difference between them in the range of their action or the basis upon which they are founded. All are forms of self-hypnotism. But hypnosis is something of itself, and in itself, which calls for extensive consideration, its basis being a sort of artificial catalepsy. Whoever is hypnotized is thrown out of his normal modes of perception; his own external perceptions are closed to him and he sees only from the basis which the operator presents to him. Mental healers and Christian Scientists make use of certain ideas and abstractions in formula which take the mind off the body, though it is generally believed that thought is the means by which the healing is effected. Now thought differs entirely in its nature and relation according to the knowledge of the thinker, and to use a prescribed formula, as do the adherents of these healing cults, is by no means to employ thought. What passes for 'thought' is the idea that diseases are caused by thinking of them, and that the only way to overcome them is by thinking of that which is not disease. Of course, this is only a formula.

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Are there cures brought about by such practices? Certainly; by each and every system, no matter how much they suffer from one another in their claims. Just so, there are cures made by every remedy ever proposed under the sun. Testimonials are found for every kind of remedy and to every kind of formula that was ever presented mankind. Medical practitioners bring about their cures also, and even the 'quack' remedies advertised in the newspapers bring floods of testimonials from people who have been cured of disease after having been given up by physicians. Since, then, healing is brought about in many

ways, it is clear that neither the fact of healing, nor any number of testimonials, have any value as evidence that any one of these systems of healing is a true system.

We need to inquire into these systems from the point of view of Theosophy, for let it be understood that the Theosophist does not attack any form of belief nor any form of philosophy what ever; he merely compares them with Theosophy. If that comparison shows a lack in their theories of explanation and a failure to give human beings a true basis to think from, by which they shall gain a realization of their own nature and the laws ruling everything in every place, it cannot be said that Theosophy is at fault, but that the partial philosophy under consideration has failed to withstand the test.

People are attracted to these partial systems of thought by the healing of disease promised. What they need to look for is not the cure, but the cause of disease. The fact that no one specific method is a cure-all ought to show that there are different kinds of disease; some, the result of bad habits, lack of exercise, wrong diet, and the failure to observe the ordinary laws of hygiene; others, nervous diseases, the effect of wrong ways of thinking, of worriments of various kinds. There are also diseases which are mechanical and organic, where certain organs have become affected to such an extent that they can not respond to normal action in accord with the other organs. The organs are materially formed of the matter of the three lower kingdoms—mineral, vegetable and animal—taken from the food eaten and transmuted into the organs. Consequently, where some kind of element is discovered to be lacking, something of a

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material nature may be added which, in most cases, in itself will restore the organ to its natural condition. Diseases caused by wrong habits are, of course, cured by correcting the habits. Where an irritation and nervous condition has been caused by too much thinking about some ailment that may exist in the body, mental" operators have their great field of 'success"; for when the mind is with drawn from the ailment, the body has within itself the power to restore itself to a normal condition in many, many cases. Where the mind is self-centered and concentrated, it does not permit the body to resume normal operation, but rather increases the disease, since the power of the consciousness of the being is placed upon that. The body has its own immunizing power, if left alone.

The body is a mechanical instrument which has been brought into being and is kept in action by the thinker who inhabits it. But those who put forward ideas in regard to mental healing have never concerned themselves for a single moment with determining the cause of humanity's having such bodies, being born into such bodies at this time on the earth. They do not inquire where they themselves have come from, whither they are going, and what the purpose of life is. All these panaceas for ills fail absolutely to recognize the operation of law—the operation of cause and effect. They call for no understanding, nor do they present a basis for right thinking, right conduct, and right

progress. Therefore, people who take up these lines get nowhere. If perchance, by taking their minds off the disease, the body gets better of itself, they have gained no knowledge by the experience; they are only made better able to continue along their ignorant lines; they die when the time comes no wiser than when they were born, believing this to be the only physical existence they will ever have.

To minds engaged with universal ideas, such as the Self of all creatures, the Divine Law of Justice, the evolution of all grades of beings, the great cycles of men and planets and universes—ideas of healing these temporary bodies appear very, very small. For what does healing mean? Getting rid of the effects which we ourselves have produced, consciously or unconsciously. What does a diseased

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body mean but that we have ignored our own natures and acted as though we were bodies, and broken every law of hygiene that we know of? If we lived according to the laws of hygiene as we know them, these diseases would not be upon us. The savage does not know anything about Christian Science; the Red Indians of the past knew nothing about mental healing of any kind, but they had remarkably healthy bodies. Was it their thought? No, for the Red Indians did much murder. It was not their thinking that made them healthy. It was their mode of life—because they lived naturally. It is our modes of life that make us unhealthy. It is our modes of thought that make us take up these modes of life. We have not discerned what we are, and consequently we have acted in ignorance.

All these healing systems are presented for one purpose—to enable us to relieve ourselves of the responsibility of our own acts. In Occultism that is a crime. We may use natural bodily methods, but we may not try to drag the Spirit itself down to relieve us of the diseases that we have brought upon ourselves. That we can think for a moment that Spirit, the root of all being, can be dragged down to relieve us of those troubles brought upon ourselves is a blasphemy to anyone who thinks deeply, and a denial of the Real Self. The body is a machine, which represents the effects of causes set in motion, whether ignorantly or consciously. We should recognize that being a machine—an instrument formed from the matter of the earth—it can be kept in balance by restoring those elements it lacks. We should not think too much of the body, nor think of it at all, save as an instrument—our present physical automobile, so to say—which we ought to keep in running order and use as we would any machine. We have to run it according to the laws of its operation to make the body a perfect instrument; but we should keep our consciousness on the plane to which it belongs— not chained to the body.

In these mental healing processes, there is a great danger. The powers of Spirit are far greater than any known power we possess—greater than dynamite, or the applications of electricity. Moving along these lines blindly as many do is liable to bring disaster, has brought insanity time and time again. We hear the “demonstration”

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of cures, but we do not get the demonstration of failures. They are many. Mental healing may throw the disease back into the place from which it came, back into the mind, but just so surely will it come out in some other form and also with more force than before. The spiritual nature itself will not permit us to avoid the results of causation which we ourselves have set in motion. Those abstractions which take the mind off the body, such as "God is all Good," "There is no imperfection," set certain currents in motion in what is known as the Pranic or Astral body. These currents act and re-act and interact between the inner and outer body, and in the end are bound to produce injury, no matter what the present benefit may appear to be. At the best, we have only delayed the day of settlement.

The only way in which the affairs of life may be brought into their proper relation and harmony is by an understanding of our own nature, and fulfilling it. That course would make a heaven of this civilization, compared with what it is now. It would obviate nine-tenths, yes, one hundred percent, of those diseases which now afflict us, whether individual or general, sporadic or epidemic. For all diseases are caused by men, individually and collectively; even the catastrophes in nature are the result of man's misunderstanding of his own nature, and the thinking and acting based upon it. The spiritual power that lies in man's thinking goes much farther than the formulation of it. Whatever of error he produces finds its return from all parts of nature—from fire and air and earth and water—for all the elements are but the embodiments of so many degrees of intelligence, and we affect them against the nature of the whole, which is a synchronous evolution. We hinder the lives and they resent it. Even the forces of our bodies are composed of lives or different kinds; the very organs in our bodies are composed of different kinds of elemental lives, all having their relations to different parts of nature.

All these healing schemes, 'isms, and religions are attempts to dodge our responsibility. Our complaints about our environments are attempts to dodge our responsibility. Our belief in this God or

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the other God, or this system of belief, this salvation, are attempts to dodge our responsibility. We have to accept that responsibility, and stay with it, first, last and all the time. For we are all bound up in one great tie; we can not separate ourselves from each other, nor from any other being. The high beings above us who have passed through the stages which we are now passing through are just as closely related to us—and more so—than we are to each other; for They desire to help us in every way, if we would only allow Them. Savior after Savior has come to the earth for our benefit, but no one can give us any more benefit than to point to the truths that have been given all down the ages. We must take advantage of that knowledge and advance out of the state in which we have

placed ourselves. No Savior can save us. No God can protect us. No devil can torment us. For both the God and the devil are within. The devil is the misunderstanding of our nature. The God is that place in ourselves that we come to know and realize and see reflected in the eyes of every living being. It is the God in us which demands self-advancement, self-induced and self-devised exertions, and the full acceptance of responsibility.

THE OCCULT SIDE OF NATURE

The word Nature used in its widest sense, as when we speak of Great Nature, or Mother Nature, means the whole of the outside—all that is external to us—the trees, the open places, and the world of men. We do not, in fact, know what that nature is, because it presents to us something external to our perceptions. We speak of “the laws of nature,” seeing that nature always acts in an orderly way, without in fact knowing at all what those laws spring from nor what they rest in. Yet nature cannot exist of itself, by itself, and come from nothing. It must come from a sufficient cause. There must of necessity be an occult side to nature. The “sufficient cause” in reality lies upon those planes which are invisible to us, but constitute a part of nature. The invisible side is the producing side—the causal side— of what we see; all the laws noted on the visible side are really

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existent in and proceed from the invisible side of nature.

First, then, let us try to understand what composes the basis of nature—what lies behind it all. Certainly not a Creator, by whose whim or command all beings and things in nature exist and move about in their established places. THAT in which lie all powers, all possibilities, all infinitude, is greater than any Being, however high. IT is an impersonal Deity. Call the divine in all of us Spirit, if you will, the Self, or God—if you do not personify or limit or define it. This One Spirit is not divided, though it seems to be divided in all creatures, just as the Sun’s rays are merely the Sun extended—they do not dissipate when the Sun disappears from our view but indraw to the Source from which they came. That which lives and thinks and perceives in each of us, and that which suffers and enjoys in each of us, is Spirit. All anyone can know of the Highest—of God—is what he knows in himself, through himself, and by himself. No out side information can bring us that perception, but only the indrawing into the very essence of our being—the center, the same center as the Great Center whence it sprang.

The laws which rule in us are not imposed by any Being or beings whatsoever. In the center of every being, whatever its form, the power of action is present. Action always brings its re-action, and it is this Law—or Karma—which operates from within alike upon every individual, incessantly and unerringly. So, too, we have collective actions and reactions of all the beings of every grade that make up the world and its inhabitants.

These collective actions make what we regard as the laws of the various elements and kingdoms, but they are contained in and subservient to that one universal Law of Karma, which is ethically stated as sowing and reaping.

Law rules all the time from the very first beginning in the finest radiant matter. That matter was builded by beings of all grades of every kind—beings of a world which preceded this where they had their course of evolution and from which they were indrawn again to the Center of the Self. Then came the dawning of another Great Day of manifestation, and all those beings were there with all the potencies, the ideas, and all their past experience—once more to

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go forth and carry on the work which they had started. It is the action and reaction by different classes of beings which causes a change and concretion in primordial substance, and this goes on from stage to stage down through seven steps of the stairway of matter. On each plane the beings clothed themselves in the substance of that plane, and we are the beings who have come down through all those stages. There is, then, hidden within us a nature, and natures, which we have not suspected. There is something within us which is not clear to us with our present modes of perception. Yet these invisible natures are ours; they are not apart from us; we have not left them anywhere on the stairway of the seven worlds. This outside nature which we all perceive through the body and with the physical senses is only the external envelope of states and stages of consciousness hidden to the generality of mankind.

There is an occult side not only to our own nature but to the nature of all beings, as should always have been apparent to us, if we had been observant; had we thought for ourselves; had we not taken for granted what others have handed down to us as religion or revelation. For there are stages in our very daily lives which are hidden from us. While we are awake, we operate through the body; then we sleep—we do not operate through the body—and that side of our nature is hidden to most people. They may know they dream, but they think the dreaming has no relation to the lines under which they operate when awake; they do not understand that dreaming is a transitional stage which precedes the reaching into our own spiritual nature and also precedes the return into operation of the body again. Usually, the dreaming state is a repetition of the scenes or experiences of daily life, but sometimes things come to us in dream that are far, far away and apart from any experience in this body. Oftentimes, the dreams which occur upon waking bring an influx from our inmost self; they bring down with us some of the experiences of a vast past. We have premonitions. We have presentiments. We have sometimes what are called "minor initiations" occurring in dreams. Never for a moment do we cease to be conscious, whether in the dreaming state, or in the full consciousness of the finer sheaths of

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the soul beyond dreaming, or in the stage of “dreaming” after “death”; how, then, could we ever know death?

In every direction in the air about us are lives which are invisible to us. There is no vacant space—not one vacant point of space. All is life. All is being of some kind or another. We take in with every breath small lives invisible to us. All these lives are classes of beings which have their own laws—laws which pertain to their own actions and reactions in kind. But to understand our own natures, we must understand the laws which operate upon those planes of being of which we are a part and on which none of us is separate from the others. This immense knowledge is back of us and within us and to be regained. There is always a high and a low expression. There is a full and an incomplete expression. The fullness of our expression is upon the highest plane; the incompleteness of our expression is on this lowest plane. We have touched the bottom of the stairway, plus all the experience gained; but if we are to reach that state from which we have descended, without any misstep, we have to understand the real occult laws which rule all the different stages of our being.

There are pretenders to a knowledge of these occult laws— for unfortunately no great amount of good can be given at any time without opening the doors to an equal amount of evil. Consider, for instance, the power of dynamite: it is good for man when properly used, but in the hands of an evil-minded one it can work great evil to humanity. Thus, a knowledge of occult laws makes it possible for a man to do good in any direction he chooses without raising a finger—or, also, to do evil. The means by which either the evil or the good is done is always a control of invisible beings—messengers for the man who knows how to use them and who understands them. All he has to do is to loose that power within himself which propels those beings to execute his mission, whatever it may be. Those powers, let it be known, lie sleeping in the sheaths of every man, and in the human body— for this body which we now possess is formed under the same laws as those of the solar system, and there is not an organ in it which does not correspond with someone or other of the celestial mansions, with some sheath or plane of consciousness, and

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with all the powers belonging to them. We have to ask ourselves if we are ready to accept the responsibility which a knowledge of these laws implies. Could we trust ourselves to have these laws imparted to us—laws which are set into operation merely by our thinking and feeling?

To use these powers rightly, a universal attitude must be held, and all actions based upon that universal nature. The philosophy of Theosophy presents that universal attitude and

basis, showing that each one is the SELF; each one looks upon all others and gathers from all others what he may of understanding and of knowledge; each one must act for that SELF and as that SELF, which includes all other selves. So acting, all ideas of selfishness, of personality, of desire for reward, of fear of punishment, leave us; defects are corrected, and the whole force of what we may call nature in its fullest sense comes into play; all the great powers of nature flow into the one moving in that direction and from that basis. We shall come to understand all laws; for, as we progress, those laws exhibit themselves spontaneously within us. We find in our possession the power to accomplish by thought, the power to do this or that at a distance, the power to speak at a distance, to be heard at a distance, to be seen at a distance, to know anything at a distance. There is nothing hidden for the one who works on and with nature; with the interests of all, he has the force of all.

The powers that were used by Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, and those of some of the older Prophets as recorded in the Old Testament, were not "God-given" powers. They came from a knowledge of the occult laws, the hidden laws of so-called "nature." The miracles of Jesus—transforming water into wine, raising the dead, operating where his body was not—were all part of his occult knowledge. Everyone who moves along that universal line learns the operation of these laws. H. P. B. and W. Q. J. did as wonderful things, and even more wonderful things than were ever recorded of Jesus. They knew the occult laws of nature. They knew the workings of occult law in themselves and therefore in all other natures. These powers are latent in every human being—not peculiar to some

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great ones. H. P. B. and W. Q. J. knew the story of "Give up thy life, if thou wouldst live." If we would live the life of a spiritual being, then all these sheaths of ours—this body and all—would be at our service. Possessing everything, we would want nothing. We should be able to do anything, but we would use no powers for ourselves. Just as we have to live Theosophy if we are to know the doctrine, so we have to "live the life" if we are to know its laws.

The minor laws by which phenomena are produced on this plane are a small part of occult study in its universal aspect. For in it lie every science, all the laws and all the powers of all, all the planes of existence and all the states of consciousness that ever have been. We are never alone. Always in some of our sheaths, bodily or bodiless, we are connected with other beings, other stages and states of substance and other planes of consciousness. Never can we be lost in that sense. But we may suffer, and suffer immensely, through making a mistake in regard to our own natures and acting with the power of our spiritual nature along false lines, creating, as the ancients said, "the black doves of death and sorrow." It is for us to arouse ourselves to take the path pointed out, to test it for

ourselves. Then, only, will each one know the truth about himself and about all other beings; then, only, will he gain what we all seek—the power to be a beneficent force in nature.

A LEAGUE OF HUMANITY

Now that the most frightful and destructive war known to the annals of history is over, the questions that arise in every thinker's mind are: What has been learned from the war? Has there been any lesson learned? Do we think for a single moment that the end of the war has brought an end to our troubles? Do we not see the clouds gathering in the skies of humanity?

Revelations of every kind are spread before us as panaceas. On the part of some there is evidence of a desire to bring people to "a moral sense"—a sense which they think resides in the Christian religion. So, they are trying to affect an amalgamation of the

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churches, imagining that to be the remedy for preventing wars and causing men to act more humanely towards each other. But the moral sense existed in times before the Christian religion was ever thought of, in other religions; in fact, the basis of all religions is morality. How comes it, if Christianity is to be the remedy, that after its being the basis of thought and action for nearly two thousand years, such a struggle has gone on among Christian nations? Does Christianity give any promise whatever of what ought to be? Would there be any benefit whatever in returning to Christianity, the whole history of which has been one of intolerance and persecution? If the Christian church had the power today, would it be any less dogmatic or intolerant than it was in the days of the Spanish Inquisition?

There is no hope in the direction of the church, because, in the first place, the people will have none of it. It has not satisfied their minds; it has not answered their questions. Instead of the knowledge they asked for, it has: given them only hope or fear. The church has lost its hold upon the people—for the great majority are not adherents of any Christian church—because of its poverty of idea, because of its dogmas and creeds. People have tried out the ideas and found them wanting. Nothing else will do but that which appeals to their sense of judgment and to their spiritual perception.

Others have placed their faith in a league of nations. Yet, they begin to see that though the ideal is beautiful, it does not prove out in practice. The members of the league have each desired to take all they could, and give as little as they could. The same spirit exists between nations now, after the settlement of peace, as existed during the conflict; the same nations are just as grasping and just as selfish as they were before the war. In this country, too, our public men still voice the particular interests of this particular nation as against all others. A league of nations could only fulfill its purpose by a common aim and

by a like ideal. Such do not obtain. The nations are not alike. None of them have high ideals—not even our own nation, which should have the greatest ideal of humanity and of nature. In stead, our ideal is one common idea—of trading, of gaining dollars or possessions, of getting advantage and prestige over

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other nations. Such an ideal will never give us peace, will never bring happiness, content, nor right progress, and there will always be struggle until we change that ideal. A league of nations among similar selfish nations can only bring what self-interest always brings—disasters of some kind. The seeds of war are in it.

Where shall we find the true foundation for a changed civilization that all men and women can see and stand on? It is not philosophies nor religions nor political panaceas that are needed; but Knowledge, and a wider scope of vision than the vicissitudes of one short physical life. The knowledge that is greater than all the forms of religion ever invented is the knowledge of the very nature of man himself, for himself and in himself. For we are not here as things apart; we are here because of one great sustaining Cause— infinite and omnipresent, not separate from us, nor from any other being. It is the same in all beings above the human and in all beings below the human—the very root of our natures, the very man himself. It is the Source of all powers and of all actions, whether good or evil. Then, everything that is done by beings affects all beings, and all that is has been caused by beings, each one affected according to its share in the cause. What the past has been, we are experiencing now—our lives now being but repetitions of lives that preceded them. What the future will be, we are making now—the lives to come depending entirely on the choice and direction of our thoughts and actions now.

The war of this or any time is the result of the warring spirit, of the selfishness of mankind. It is the result of the failure to understand the great purpose of life, the nature of our minds, the full power of attainment within each being, the one Law of absolute justice inherent in all beings, the One Deity behind and in all, the one Goal for every Pilgrim, however the path varies. As soon as men are brought to the perception that everyone reaps exactly what he sows, no one will do harm to any other being; there will then be no war. There will be no such misery as now exists; for to realize our own responsibility to all others and to act in accordance, is to have become unselfish, and to have done away with the prime cause of sin, sorrow and suffering.

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Back of the failure to understand our own true natures lie false ideas, false conceptions of life, false ideals—the heritage of our Christian civilization. We have believed that we were born in this condition or environment by the “will” of some God. We have imagined a personal God, a personal devil, and a personal Savior. We have imagined an impossible

heaven and an equally impossible hell. We have imagined a “creation,” instead of evolution. We have believed that we are poor, weak, miserable sinners, and have acted out the part. We have laid all our troubles and evils and pain upon some other imaginary Being. Thus, we have remained irresponsible creatures, mere rationalized animals; not immortal souls. We have dodged our responsibility. But we must guide ourselves according to the realities of our own nature. We must take care of each other, not of ourselves according to the personal basis on which this and every other nation in the world is proceeding today.

We are going to have a league of humanity only when the ancient truths of the Wisdom Religion are once more perceived — when there is one purpose and one teaching. Its truths are self-evident, not to be accepted because written in some book, nor because they are the dicta of some particular church. They are the only truths worth considering because in the use of them they prove themselves true. And truth, as we ought to know, always explains. When we have the explanation, we have the truth. Each has to make his own verification of the truth, but the fact remains that there is truth, and it has always existed. It has come to us from Beings higher than we, because once They turned Their faces in the right direction and pursued the course pointed out to Them as leading to spiritual, divine perfection. They know all that has been known. They know us, although we may not know Them. They know our needs, although we may be densely ignorant of them. They come again and again to present the truths of life to man, hoping that some echo may be aroused in his soul so that he, too, shall arrive at a realization of Self, of Spirit — which is Knowledge.

Those who can see the course of humanity see nothing but much trouble yet for the world in general. Nothing but severe, dire disaster

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will make men stop and think. The war has not ceased! The war is going on between us all the time. Consider our selfish pursuits, our condemnations, our judgments, our criticisms, our foolish laws, which seek to make men “good” by legislation with no attempt to arouse the real nature of man, but only to repress what is considered “bad.” Prohibitions of all kinds serve only to exasperate the evil nature in men. We need not to prohibit. We need to educate, and first of all, we need to educate ourselves. Let us take the beam out of our own eyes before we try to remove the mote from the eyes of others. Let us retreat into the shrine of our own being. Let us be that Self, and act for and as that Self. Let us follow the lines of the law of our own being — compassion, love, helpfulness for all — and then we shall be able to understand ourselves and the natures of all others. Then we shall be able to help men in a way they are sometimes not aware of; we shall be able to help leaven the whole lump.

It is because there are those in the world desirous of helping humanity to proceed further, that we are not worse off. Often the ideas given out by men in high places are not the result of their own cogitations, although thought to be such. Many an idea is received by those who have the ear of the public, who speak and will be heard, from Those with a far deeper knowledge of the issues at stake, yet whose voices would not be heard at all. So, though there may seem to be little action on the part of Theosophical disciples, there is much action on inner planes of being, and that action never but for the benefit of humanity. If only once any considerable number of persons could take the true position and act from the true nature, right ideas would soon spread all over the earth. Once the ideas are implanted in our minds, we can help the world by speaking of them, and by exemplifying them. We can do that much, however selfishly the world moves on.

A true league of humanity could be formed—without social distinctions, class distinctions, national distinctions. In their stead would come a common perception and a common realization of the universe and a common course for humanity. We must know that we are all of other peoples. We came through all the civilizations

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that have been. We have passed through the Eastern, the near East, and the European peoples and now we are here, at the farthest confines of the West, under the law of Karma. Civilization must roll back over the course it came, and as it goes back in spirit, speech, act, and example towards the East from which it came, the misconceptions that have arisen around religious and other ideas will be cleared away by the power of our knowledge and example.

We are here as the best representatives of the people of the world—the most intelligent, the freest in mind and opinion, the freest in action. All that means something under Law, and it means that every being coming in contact with the Ancient Wisdom has an opportunity devolved upon him. We have not met for the first time, nor have we met for the last. Once more we are together, and listening to what we do absolutely know inside. There is that in us which sees and knows when the word is spoken which gives first indication of the life within a life, of a life greater than this we have conceived life to be. Then we begin to tread that small old path that stretches far away—the Path that our great Predecessors, the Masters, have trod before us.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

All have doubtless made New Year's resolutions, and all, no doubt, have failed to keep them. There must be a reason for our failures, as well as for the fact that there comes a certain season in the year when we have the inclination to make resolutions. These reasons lie hidden in the depths of our own being. Unconsciously to ourselves, it may be, we have a natural perception of occult law in our observance of this particular period of

the year. The ancients celebrated and understood what was called by them “the birth of the Sun,” or the return of the Sun on its northern course, beginning the 21st of December. They knew that all the occult forces in nature have an upward and increasing tendency at the return of the Sun. When the Sun’s rays become warmer and stronger, all the other forces behind the Sun itself, and behind ourselves, become stronger

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within us. In the rising wave of spiritual and psychic renewal, all that we desire to do has a greater impulsion than at some other time of the year.

The reason for our failures is that we do not understand our own natures. Consequently, we are not able to use the force and influence that lie within us, so far as we are physically concerned, and we have difficulty in endeavoring to carry out resolutions of any kind. Our first mistake is to make negative resolutions. We say, I will not drink; I will not lie; I will not do this; I will not do that. Whereas the proper resolve to make is that—I will do this, the opposite of what we are now doing. In this case, we make a direct affirmation of will, while the other form of resolution puts us in a purely negative position. Perhaps we have thought with regard to others or ourselves, that because we do not do a number of questionable things, therefore we are “good.” On the contrary, we are merely not bad—again a negative position. True goodness is a positive position.

To affect our resolutions, we have to call on the will of man, for that will is not restrained by any form of obstacle what ever. By will, however, is not meant what is ordinarily called will. We are prone to think that a person who is very determined on gaining his ends has “a strong will,” and is very positive in his character; but such a person exhibits only a kind of will. He has very, very strong desires, rather than Will itself, and will follow them out.

There are many exhibitions of the will itself, some phases being quite unrecognized. The very will to live is a recondite aspect of Will. If the will to live were not present, we would not live. It is not the body which holds us here but the desire to live. Always behind Will stands Desire. Again, everyone of man’s bodily organs and processes was at one time evolved by conscious effort. Even the process of digestion, of assimilation, the heart beat, the various qualities and functions of all the organs were consciously evolved. Now we have bodies which will proceed automatically, while we use our consciousness, perceptions and attention in other directions. Our will, then, operates in reality in every part of our physical life though

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we may not be able to perceive it and understand it. There is also a mental phase of the will which can be cultivated by practice: the fixed attention, or concentration in certain directions capable of effecting desired results.

But the real and true Will is known as the Spiritual Will, which flies like light and cuts all obstacles like a sharp sword. It is that Will proceeding from the highest spiritual part of our natures which causes man to be an evolution from within outwards, through all the forms of substance that have been, and to continue evolving instruments in this state of matter. All the powers that exist or can exist are latent, however ill expressed, in the spiritual nature. We draw from it in degree, but in small degree because most of us, having our ideas so fixed on physical existence, have come to the conclusion that life means nothing more than physical existence.

We were once conscious of our spiritual nature, but as we came down through the planes of matter to this plane, we made a growth in intellectuality at the expense of spiritual perception. With our intellect we always reason from premises to conclusions, whereas the spiritual nature has the power of direct cognition of the nature of anything regarded. So, our intellectual gain was at the loss of spiritual insight, and it is useless for theology, science, and psychology to proceed from the personal and physical perceptions in order to get an understanding of what man really is: their psychological causes are but reflections of the physical ideas. If we are going to realize our own natures, we must begin at the highest point of our nature—by assuming that.

It is, and by holding to the power of that assumption. We begin to see light by the very affirmation of the spiritual nature.

As we stand, we are always using our will along the line of our desires and of our likes and dislikes, imagining these to be a proper basis for thought and action. What is most necessary for us is a proper basis for thinking. We need to eject the false idea of our being weak, sinful creatures, with all the faults of our parents and their parents before them, because we were born that way. We need to eject the mental idol of an outside creator. We need to understand

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the purpose of life, to see that we are the product of many of our own prior lives, and to recognize an evolution under law—a law both true and merciful—which operates everywhere. It is because that law operates in a round of impression that we have the tendency each year to make New Year's resolutions. We could by an understanding and using of this law of recurrence bring into effect those resolutions.

Often, however, resolutions are made because it is 'proper' to make them—with no real expectation of keeping them. We remember them for a few days—they choke us off for a little while—and then gradually the old desires assert themselves and we find ourselves traveling along the old way. Resolutions will never do us any good if we do not sustain them. A desire is not a condition. The mere desire will never get us anywhere. We have to maintain the desire; we have to stick to the resolution; we have to exert our will, and

cleave to the object of that will throughout. We can't get rid of the evil in us by thinking of it, nor can we get rid of any unpleasant thing by thinking about it; for it is truly said that we are attached to anything by thinking about it. The harder we don't think about the evil things in us, the better; think about their opposites, and the evil will not have the chance to return. Attachment is by thought, first of all. Desire exists in thought, first of all. Then follows the action. We have to have a firm basis for our thinking if we are ever going to express ourselves as we should, as spiritual beings.

Why do we all have our pet theories of life, our pet religions or philosophies? Because they conform to our own *desires*; not because they conform to truth or that they provide an explanation of all the mysteries we see about us. This is why after so many thousands of years of what we call civilization, we have become none the wiser, still moving in the same old tread-mill of life and death and sorrow and suffering and pain. Yet we are not bound to it, save as we bind ourselves by our own thoughts and action. We are not under the necessity of following along on those planes of error as we are now doing.

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There is a chance for us if we understand our own natures. Then, let us resolve one great thing: resolve to know; resolve to think right, and do right; resolve to acquire some of the knowledge that always has existed—the knowledge of man as a spiritual being through all his fluctuations in the realm of matter. As we rely more and more upon the Self within, we begin to express and use the power which we already have—and that is far more than we imagine. We have to help ourselves by taking the suggestions already given in the teachings of Theosophy—which are Masters' suggestions. And then, as the sustaining power of the will is held along the line in which we desire to do, more direct help comes from those Elder Brothers, who at every hour of each day "are willing and anxious to meet those clear-eyed enough to see their true destiny and noble-hearted enough to work for 'the great orphan, Humanity'."

OCCULT KNOWLEDGE

Occult Knowledge means knowledge which is "hidden," but it also means knowledge which is known. If it is knowledge that is known, there must be Those who know it; there could be no knowledge without the knowers of it. True occult knowledge can be obtained only by those who follow the path to it. That path was set down by Those Who Know; all who will may and can arrive at that knowledge. This is not a path open only to certain persons; it is open to every living human being, and limited only by the limitations we ourselves place around it through choice or through ignorance. Much is heard in the world today of what passes for "occult knowledge." Much experiment goes on under that name in various directions: we have societies for psychical and psychological research, and there is much talk of psychic and astral "experiences" and "communications" with the dead. All these various methods of research are from below, upwards, and will never

find the goal. Scientific methods, psychological methods, the methods of the Spiritualists, alike proceed from particulars to universals. Particulars are infinite, and those who follow that path will inevitably get lost in its

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infinite ramifications, with no real knowledge gained. The goal is to be found from above, below—from universals to particulars, and not the reverse.

The Path of real occult knowledge begins where all begin. It is the Path of all beings, and we need to see the reason why it is an open path for all. We find ourselves in the midst of a vast evolution, with beings of many grades still below us—lower in point of consciousness and intelligence than ourselves—as also we ought to see there must be beings above us far greater than we are. All these beings have sprung from a common Source; all differ seemingly, yet there exists, supreme in all, the same power to perceive, to know, to learn.

We have to understand the reason for the differences in beings and for our own limitations. Let us, then, seek out the beginnings of things—for everything that exists had a beginning, and, of course, everything that had a beginning will have an ending. If our beginning was with this life only, the end of this life would be our complete extinction; then we would have no concern with anything else. But there is knowledge that extends prior to this birth and beyond this life, and in that hidden knowledge we may get the clue to an understanding of not only our own natures, but the nature of all beings everywhere.

Our first firm basis is in the perception that all knowledge must lie in and be sustained by the common Source of which we are a part and an expression. That common Basis could not be any supreme Being, for “Being” means finiteness and limitation, and outside of it must still be that which is not contained. We have to go far back of all beings and creations and creatures to that Cause which lies behind all life, all consciousness, all spirit, all being. That is not different in any being. IT is the same in all, so must be the essential Divinity in all beings of every grade. There is one Absolute Principle which is the origin, the sustainer, the container, of all that ever was, is, or shall be. We call it a PRINCIPLE, because to name IT is to define IT, to limit IT, to belittle IT. To endeavor to give IT attributes of any kind is a limitation, and we must go back of all limitations if

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we are to understand the Omnipresent and Immortal in us and in all things.

Our search for knowledge is almost universally a looking for something outside. We are looking for information, for instruction, in the thoughts of other men, in the ideas of other peoples, which, in this school of Occult Knowledge, is not knowledge at all. The only knowledge we can have is that which we gain for ourselves, and within ourselves, as

actual experience. External facts and information can never give us any understanding whatever of the higher, more divine parts of our nature.

There is no understanding, no explanation, of the mysteries of our own existence, on the basis of a single life. We have to go beyond that, back of that, to realize what evolution means. Evolution means an unfolding from within outwards. That is the way all beings grow—physically, intellectually, spiritually. The beings below us are unfolding; they are embryonic souls not yet arrived at the human stage of self-consciousness and self-realization, but they are on their way to where we already are. The same thing is true of all the beings above us. They have already passed through stages similar to ours. The inner part—the Enduring in every being—is illimitable, infinite, in its power of unfolding and expression, because it is the Immortal.

But, one may say, there was a beginning to this life. So, too, there was a beginning to this day, to this experience, to this collection of experiences, to this body. Yes; but in each and every case this beginning and those beginnings were the repetitions of other beginnings and endings—of what? Of experiences, of instruments, of perceptions; not of the Perceiver, the real being. This brings us to the perception of Law; the Law of Periodicity, of Cycles, which is illustrated in every department of nature. Our being here under evolution ought to show any intelligent person that no one has reached his present stage save through previous stages. That which pushes “us” on, that which is the basis of all the powers we show or express, is the Spirit in us, our real Self. The Spirit of man has all the powers that any Spirit has. That Spirit is universal, not limited to any one being or class of beings. In man it is individualized

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and is the true Ego in each of us. As such Ego we have the direction of that inflow of universal force which we call the Spirit, and we direct that power in various ways, some of which we call good, and others we recognize as evil; for it must be understood that neither good nor evil exist of themselves, but only as the results of action.

We have imagined that good and evil have come to us from others, but as directors of the forces of Spirit, as Egos, we can see there is nothing brought to us nor upon us except as we cause that operation ourselves. ‘We have often heard it said, “Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” and we have perhaps believed it. But have we ever applied it in another way, that whatever we are reaping we must have sown?’

The Law of Periodicity, of Cycles, being universal, must apply in every particular to every particular being. That is justice. If Law is not universal then this is not a universe of law, but of chance. If it is a universe of law, then our very conditions, our possessions, our intelligence, our beliefs, everything that comes to us, comes as the result of our thought and action. As we are reaping at any time, so we must have sown at some time. As we

are sowing at any time, so we must reap at some time. Our birth, our circumstances, are reapings. Our attitude towards them, our use of them, are sowings. We are born into any body, any conditions, as the result of our past sowing—our past lives. This is justice, and it alone explains the differences between people.

We are responsible beings, and the feeling of responsibility is the first step towards selflessness. The thought that Law is imposed upon us by any being or beings, is destroyed by the recognition that Law is inherent in ourselves: as each one acts—that is, affects others—so is the re-action upon himself.

The differences between people, and the contradictions in ourselves, are in the fundamental ideas held; for as a man thinks, so he acts. If he thinks this is the first time he has been on earth, that it is the only time; if he believes that some being brought him here, governs him while here, is going to take care of him when he dies—

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if he has those ideas, he will act in accordance with them, and will receive the inevitable reaction.

But if we see that the Spirit is behind everything, that all Law is the action of Spirit, that we are Spirit, we shall have a true perception of our own natures. We will begin to think in ages, instead of the days of one short life; the basis of our actions will be those Eternal verities that have been proven again and again by Supermen—those Beings above us who once passed through our stage, and who are now the Knowers of the Eternal. They hold this knowledge, and that which has been given out by Them as Theosophy is a statement of a portion of Their knowledge. It is as much as we can assimilate, or understand, or use.

So, being Spirit, and acting under the Law of our own Being, we grow to realize what the whole Universe means: that the Universe exists for no other purpose than the evolution of Soul—the embryonic souls below us, the partially developed souls here among us, and the perfectly developed souls above us—all climbing the great stair of development, of Self-evolution. No one can force us up the stair. We may go on and on, remaining on the same level for myriads of lives; we may go lower; but if we are ever to make the ascent from Man to Superman, from Soul to Great Soul, we ourselves must fulfill the conditions that will enable us to do so.

Along these lines lies Occult Knowledge. There is such a knowledge, and it is far beyond what we call reason; for reason is merely working from premises to conclusions, whereas real knowledge is direct cognition. We do not reason about the things we know. We do not have to reason about all the knowledge we have attained in the past; when we are on the plane of Knowledge, we know without any reasoning whatever. This goes far deeper than most people imagine. It is possible for the human being to reach that stage where by looking at anything he can tell the whole nature of it—from its origin, all the processes

through which it has passed, all the incidental relations it may have had. This is direct cognition—Occult Knowledge. It is to be gained by the recognition and conscious use of the powers of the Inner Self. It cannot be gained by reasoning, nor by

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the inferences reached from looking at things from outside and judging from what we are able to perceive; it is gained by what we call the Intuition—the acquired knowledge of all the past. Occult Knowledge enables one absolutely to determine what is the nature and essence of anything regarded.

True and full Intuition can come to us as a steady light only through our doing away with the false ideas that we now hold and employ. What is required is a correction of our basis of thinking. Theosophy gives us the true basis for right thinking, and so for right action. The consistent and persistent effort to think and act from the right basis draws out a certain power in ourselves, and that power manifests, first of all, as the power of concentration—the ability to hold our mind upon a single subject or object to the exclusion absolute of every other thing.

How many of us have that power? I venture to say, not one. We have no stability of mind, and we must get that. But the power of concentration cannot be used if we imagine ourselves to be changeable, perishable beings. We think that in order to “develop,” we must change. It is not true. We need to change our fundamental ideas, our minds, our modes of thought, our instruments. That is where the development comes. If we are ever going to learn to concentrate, we must concentrate from the basis of the steady point in us, the Perceiver, the Spirit, our real unchanging Immortal Self. We cannot come to or connect with that Power in ourselves unless we realize that all life is One, that all beings like ourselves are moving on the same path. In that way we realize Universal Brotherhood in a spiritual sense: Altruism should actuate us in every thought, word and deed.

If we consider these things, we shall see how far away we may be from making a beginning in the direction of Occult Knowledge. A beginning has to be made, and the sooner we start the better. It calls for the arousal of the Spiritual Will. Will is not a thing in itself, a power in itself. The will is consciousness in action, as distinguished from consciousness inactive. As soon as we think or desire in any direction the ‘will’ works. That will is weak or strong according

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to our idea of ourselves, our thoughts, our desires, our aspirations, our considerations of our weaknesses, our limitations. If we realize that we are Spiritual beings and think and act in the right direction, at once the Spiritual Will begins to work, the power of

Concentration is strengthened, the feeling of responsibility grows, the whole nature begins to change, to be transformed—the Great Transition is going on.

These are the Eternal Verities that we ought to grasp. We ought to grasp them first and apply them in ourselves and to ourselves, and then we will find that these ideas are true, because their truth is realized—has become as evident to us as the sun in heaven.

THE POWER OF SUGGESTION

The power of suggestion means many different things to many minds. It is coupled with the idea of hypnosis, where the operator is able to make the subject think, say, do, or imagine anything he chooses. That is possible through the abnormal condition of the subject. The means and methods of inducing this abnormal condition are not generally known, although some practitioners have hit upon various ways of bringing on hypnosis in some subjects.

But what is to be discussed is the fact of suggestion itself, generally considered, and as it affects all men. People are not aware that they act almost entirely under suggestion. From our birth we are surrounded by those who suggest certain ideas to us as true, and we follow these suggested ideas. There is very little original thought anywhere, and particularly is this true in those lines to which the public pays the most attention—that is, politics, religion, science. Whatever system of thought is presented to us, that we adopt. We follow the suggestion given, with no attempt to reach to the basis of that which is suggested. The foundation upon which the suggestion rests is taken for granted, even in the most important things in life.

Our religion, for example, is stated to be a ‘revelation.’ We accepted it in childhood, accepted it as a fact, without looking into it to see what it is and on what it is founded. Our powers of thought

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and action being based upon a false suggestion does not inhibit their exercise, but as a result all our possibilities of thought and action, all our mental creations, the whole super structure of our existence, are false, because, thinking from false premises, our thinking will inevitably lead to false conclusions.

This is just as truly the fact as in the case of the hypnotized subject. He is thrown into an abnormal condition; he has nothing before his mind; the operator presents a given idea and with it the suggestion of a certain mode of action. Immediately the subject adopts the suggestion, goes to work on it, and will continue working along the suggested line cumulatively until the suggestion is changed.

Those who are born into any particular sect ought to know this. With our first sense of understanding, ideas are presented to us, instilled into our minds as absolute facts. We

proceed from that basis, and however long it is followed, no true understanding or conclusion can be reached. What do we know of the truth or falsity of these ideas when presented to us in childhood? Nothing whatever. What do our parents and teachers know of them? Nothing whatever. They have merely passed on to us the suggestions which they received in childhood and which have operated in them cumulatively ever since.

We must learn not to accept statements, no matter by whom made, simply because they are made to us. We must get at the basis of whatever is presented, know what its principles are—whether those principles are self-evident. If they are not self-evident, how can they be basic?

The idea is common to everybody in the Western world that there is a Creator of this universe. What do we know about it? If it is true that a being created the universe and all the beings in it, then we are not responsible. In continuance of that idea other ideas follow it: that man is here but once, that this is his only birth, and that from here he knows not where he goes. We have followed the suggestion that a man lives but one life, that he is fundamentally irresponsible for his being here, and we have built up our thoughts and actions on that basis. Does it make us wiser, happier, while we live? Does it produce peace and happiness for others? Does it bring us to the end

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of life any wiser, any better off? For we know that when we come to the end of life, we leave every earthly thing we have gained while here.

But this earth is only one of many earths. What of the other planets, the other solar systems with which space is filled? Have we any vital knowledge in regard to them or the reason for their existence under the suggestions that have been handed to us?

When our religious impressions are changed, when other suggestions are given us, are they not handed to us in the same way? Whatever they are— Science, “New Thought,” “Christian Science,” and so on—we adopt them, move along the lines suggested by those who give them to us, and what do we really learn? Nothing. We come to the end of life just as encased in ignorance, despite all the “revelations” ever given us. What do we know of their bases? Are they true or only partially so? We are never asked to look into their fundamentals, to see for ourselves if they are true, self-evident. No; we are asked to accept what is given us and go to work on that. That is suggestion.

Our municipal life, our national life, our political life, are all under suggestion, and few are they who try to go to the root of things and understand what the nature of being is, so that they can know for themselves and thus act with power and knowledge. As we look the field over, we find that we are all prey to the power of suggestion in every direction.

What is the criterion which we should apply to every suggestion presented to us? Just this: If we have the truth, it will explain what was before a mystery. And as we are surrounded by mysteries, the Truth must explain them all.

This power of suggestion must still be used, whatever line may be pointed out to us. If Truth exists and is possible to us—the Truth in religion, science and philosophy—it must first come to us by suggestion from Those who know. If it were not possible for this to be done, were not possible for us to avail ourselves of it, then there would be no use talking of these things. But when the true is suggested to us, there is always a means presented by which we may

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see and verify it. That means is not in anyone's authority or endorsement, but in the fact that we can perceive it and test it for ourselves. The final authority is the man himself.

An outside God is an idol. We have to reach into the very recesses of our own being and understand that it is ourself that chooses and determines for itself what it shall accept and what reject. The very power of Divinity—the power of choice—is in each one of us. When we begin to understand that, we get the first clue to our own immortality. So we may see that That which lives and thinks in man is the Eternal Pilgrim. If you prefer to use the term God, you may say, "So many men on earth, so many Gods in heaven."

There are many beings below man; perhaps some will admit that there may be, that there are, beings greater than man. None of these beings can be omnipresent, none of them can be the Supreme. What is that which is omnipresent and supreme in each and every being—in man, in the beings below man, in the beings above man? is it not this Power to perceive, to think, to choose, to act upon the thinking and the choosing—upon the Intelligence which the being has? That Power transcends all beings, all conceptions. It is that Power which lies at the root of all evolution, and is the very Essence of every being. No one is separate from That. No one is without That. All are rays from and one with That. There is no possibility of any existence apart from That.

Man stands in the midst of a vast and silent evolution—the evolution of Intelligence, of Soul. All the beings below man must be coming up the ladder of being to our stage, and whatever beings may exist beyond man, they must have passed through our stage and gone still farther up the ladder. They are our Elder Brothers and have passed through civilizations before ours—many, many ages before ours—and have reached a point of development far higher than ours. It is They who have carried forward all the knowledge gained in that vast evolution which has preceded ours.

These Elder Brothers of the human family are not spirits in the ordinary sense of the word, nor are they hazy beings, "gods" or "angels" They are *men*, Mahatmas (Great Souls), who are perfected

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beings physically, mentally, morally, psychically, spiritually—who stand now where we shall one day stand, when we have perfected ourselves in the same way that They have done, through self-induced and self-devised exertions.

These Masters stand to us in Their knowledge and power, in Their ability and efforts to help and guide us, as the greatest and most powerful suggestion that could be made to any human being. They are willing and ready to help whenever and where ever we are willing and ready to receive. They never ask for anything; They are always ready to give to those who may be willing to follow the lines indicated, so that we in our turn may become as They are—may know for ourselves.

If we take Their philosophy as given to us in Theosophy, if we take it as a theory to be examined on its merits, we shall find that it *explains*. It explains why there are so many different kinds of people; it explains different natures; it explains why some suffer more and others suffer less. It explains why each one is born in a particular place, in that family, in that nation, at that time. It explains every inequality in life, every injustice, every mystery. It will enable a man to realize his own immortality, to live a conscious existence in Spirit, even while incarnated in a body here on this earth. At present we live in matter; we think that we exist in matter and are dependent on matter for our existence. We think in matter. Our religion is materialistic; our science is materialistic; our philosophy is materialistic. All this is due to the misuse of the power of suggestion and to our acceptance of ideas without investigation, without comparison, upon authority. We believe; we do not know.

There is no Divinity, save it has evolved as such from the One Spirit. Every Divine being is an evolution. Where ever divinity is spoken of it means an evolution of a being. All intelligence is based in the Power to perceive, and that exists in every grade of being. Intelligence is the extension of the power to know. This idea sets aside a great many suggestions that we have perhaps depended upon. It would be well for us if we did not depend upon anything save our own inherent power to learn, to extricate ourselves from our difficulties.

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All our powers are born with us; all our past experiences are with us, but they are crowded out by the suggestions given to us when we were children, and by the false ideas which we still entertain. Nothing but the Truth can ever set us free, and that Truth each one can find and follow, and thus come to know for himself.

TRUE CLAIRVOYANCE

Since the Theosophical Movement took outward expression in 1875, the term clairvoyance (clear seeing) has become familiar to many people. In the latter part of last century and in the early part of this century, many kinds of clairvoyance have been observed and experienced. Clairvoyance itself had its own peculiar development and facility, the different kinds of clairvoyance relating to varying degrees of perception of matter where there was no physical thing to be seen, and to events transpiring at a great distance from where the seer was located. Unfortunately, all of these kinds of clairvoyance were limited in their scope; they were but partial clairvoyance.

Societies of psychology and of psychical research have under taken the task of finding out what the power of clairvoyance may or may not be, from the basis of brain, or mere physical existence. They seek the necessary causes in effects which themselves have been set in motion by causes which are hidden. Consequently, their researches are limited. Yet, clairvoyance itself, however followed, points to the fact that there is latent in man the power to see, hear, feel, contact, at any distance whatever; and the power is not limited to any special person, or persons, but is common to all humanity.

There is a true clairvoyance. There is a true school of occultism. There are many false clairvoyants. There are many false schools of occultism. All the false schools go in some particular direction that is attractive to the ordinary human mind—the mind that desires to obtain something for itself, as it believes itself to be. So with the different kinds of clairvoyance—if the desire on the part of one endeavoring to find the power in himself is to obtain something for himself, the clairvoyance obtained will never lead him in any true direction.

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Nothing can give a true understanding of clairvoyance, nor bring to our minds what true clairvoyance may be, but a study of the nature of man, of the nature of the world in which he lives, and the nature of the solar system in which that world exists.

The clue to true clairvoyance lies in the septenary nature of man. There are seven distinct planes of consciousness; there are seven distinct states of matter, of which the physical is one. These seven distinct planes of action are the different departments of man's nature, but it is the same One who acts in all the different departments. Clairvoyance, then, in any true sense, we should understand to be clear seeing in each and every one of these seven departments of the nature of man. All other partial clairvoyance can bring us no great results, and, certainly, no great knowledge.

Many are those who have 'sat for development,' have endeavored to obtain the state that is termed "the astral plane," in order to be able to see and hear at a distance. But the greatest danger imaginable lies in that direction. The mere seeing or hearing things does not give any understanding of their nature, and many things to which we may be

attracted on the astral plane are dangerous and poisonous in their nature. The efforts made to reach that plane are always by means of passivity, and, when we allow ourselves to become passive, any influence what ever outside of the normal physical perceptions may reach us. We are just as much the prey of evil effects as we are open to good effects, but we are not choosers in either direction. What ever may be in our nature attracts the good, or evil, or mixed, accordingly; but the mere seeing or hearing would of itself give us no knowledge, nor carry us one step on the way of progress. For illustration, say we were transported to the planet Mars, saw the operation of the beings there and heard the sounds made in their speech. If they were a different kind of beings from ourselves, we would have no understanding at all of what they were doing. True knowledge and true understanding are gained by a comprehension of laws and principles, and in no other way. Just as there is a law which from the very beginning of our being prompted us to advance step by step in development, so there is a law which admits us step by

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step up the stairs of knowledge. Not one of those steps may be omitted. To attempt to get to the top by springing from the bottom is not possible, for each step depends upon every other—the highest resting upon all the rest, the lowest preceding the highest.

The septenary nature of man is best explained by reference to the three great principles which underlie all life, as well as every religion and every philosophy that ever has been, or ever can be. They may be indicated by the brief terms God, Law, and Being. As to God, the ancients have recorded that there is One Absolute Principle—Unspeakable, Untranslatable, Undefinable, Infinite, Omnipresent—the Cause, the Sustainer of all that was, is, or ever shall be. Deity, the Omnipresent, can be absent from no point of space, and we are inseparable from It. Each one is of That—a ray from and one with that Absolute Principle. The power in us to perceive, to know, to experience—apart from any thing that is seen, known, or experienced—is the One Self, the One Life, and the One Consciousness, shared by all alike—the Source of every being, the Life of every being, the Power of every being. Behind all perceiving and knowing and experiencing is the One undivided Self. Herein lies the true basis of Brotherhood—the unifying bond for all above man and for all below man—and the real growth into divine life is the increasing realization of the fullness of that Life in each. Acting for and as that Self in every direction, realizing that the Self acts in all and through all, and endeavoring to realize more and more that each one is that Self, the fullness of one's own nature and of other natures comes to be seen, appreciated, understood, and helped.

The second great principle—Law—shows that the universe is a boundless plane, in which occur periodical manifestations. This earth had a beginning; this solar system had a beginning. So, too, they will have an ending, since everything that begins in time ends in time. All earths, solar systems, and beings of every grade, have reached their present

stage through evolution—that evolution under exact law, inherent in the nature of the beings concerned. All evolution proceeds from beings. It is the force of the beings in action which causes individual and collective results. The law of laws is

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Karma—the law of action and re-action, of cause and effect, which are the aspects of action, and which can not be separated. All progress goes on under this law in the natural sequence of periods of activity and periods of rest. As after night comes morning again; as after spring, summer, autumn, winter comes spring again; so, after birth, youth, manhood, death comes birth again. The process of reincarnation, or coming into a body again, is just as natural as coming into another day which is not yet. This life is; last life was; next life will be. So, as planets or solar systems have their ending, will they and the beings who composed them, have their re-incarnation—a new beginning.

The third fundamental principle points to the fact that all beings in the universe have evolved from lower points of perception into greater and greater individualization; that the beings above man have gone through our stage; that there never can never be a stoppage of evolution in an infinite universe of infinite possibilities; that whatever stage of perfection may be reached in any race, on any planet, or in any solar system there are always greater opportunities beyond.

When this solar system began, then, it was merely a continuation of that which had been. In another aggregation, on another planet, beings of every grade, corresponding to our mineral, animal, man, and superman, were working together. That great day of operation ceased; that world stopped so far as any further action was concerned, just as we stop when we cease waking consciousness and go into sleep. Then the dawn of the next day comes. There is an arousal and operation again. All the beings that had hitherto expressed themselves, that had been indrawn into the primordial state of matter, go forth again on a new basis to further development.

We were self-conscious beings when this world began, clothed in that primordial state of matter from which all subsequent states have proceeded, and in which the possibilities of change are infinite. Just as our planet, beginning in a nebulous state, tends to a concretion, gradually cooling, hardening, and condensing, so every living human being has made himself concretions of substance, until he has reached this most dense plane, and final concretion in the present

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physical body. Those stairs down which he has descended are seven in number. That this solar system, this earth and man are septenary in nature is the teaching. Observe the seven notes of the scale, and the seven colors of the spectrum. These colors do not ‘happen,’ by chance; they are evolutions, differentiations of the one substance. Both

sound and color are different rates of vibration caught by the instruments of the ear, the eye, or both. Some think that while we have now only five senses, we are gradually acquiring another sense. What we really have are five organs that give five distinct characteristics of matter. What we shall next arrive at is an understanding of the sixth characteristic of matter, and beyond that is the seventh synthetic sense, which covers all and belongs to the higher planes of being.

If we are that being who is the perceiver, the knower, the spirit, Life, Consciousness itself—what would be true clairvoyance? Could that by any possibility be called true clairvoyance which would be embraced in the mere looking through fleshly eyes upon a state of matter only a little removed from this of the earth? There are true clairvoyants who not only know what is apparent to everybody, but who see everything that is in a human being, or in any being. In their sight, one can not make a motion of any kind—such a simple motion as moving from one chair to another—without setting every one of his seven senses into action and exhibiting along the line of those seven senses every single qualification and motive he may ever have held. It is within the power of some to know the very hearts of men, to know the very motives that actuate them. In true clairvoyance, the real being is absolutely and unconditionally awake. He is using every one of the instruments with precision and in exact line with one another. He has clear seeing. He reaches down into the motives of man, because he sees everything. How can he see? Every center in man—that is, every organ—has been evolved under the operation of the laws that govern the solar system. These laws may be known. Every center has its own distinctive color and its own distinctive sound; it also presents a distinctive symbol and form. If, then, one knew the laws of sounds, colors, symbols and form, he

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could tell, just as exactly as we tell the simplest thing, what caused the nature of any motion and the motive that underlay it. From him, deception could not be hid; evil could not be hid; motives could not be hid. Such an acquisition, without any possibility of failure, would be divine—the true clairvoyance.

True clairvoyance is not gained by “sitting for development.” One might sit for development ten million years, and in the end be only capable of sitting. The true power is gained by trying to realize our own divine nature, and to act as divinity acts; by trying to get all the possessions possible, that we may place them at the service of our fellow-men. The power is gained by self sacrificing service, and in no other way. The divine in us has its fullest expression in self-sacrifice. As man moves along, realizing more and more his own nature, working more and more for the natures of every other, he finds spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously within him. He seeks nothing for himself. He seeks all power and all knowledge only that he may help others less endowed. Jesus said: “Let him who would be the greatest among you serve the least.”

And so it has always been in this great work, that those who were the greatest among us served the least, were the humble ones, who sought no preference, no recognition.

Altruism, self-sacrifice, devotion to the highest interests of humanity—these constitute the one password to true clairvoyance. If it could be had in any other way, would not a great many things that have happened, a great many disasters that have befallen different peoples, been avoided? If such knowledge could be bought, would not institutions be despoiled, people robbed, the stock-market exploited, and all sorts of self-advantages gained? But true knowledge is never used for self-advantage; not even for defence. When Jesus was on the cross, they said: “Let Him save Himself; let Him come down from the cross. He saved others; Himself He cannot save.” ‘Was He powerless to come down? Not at all. They had wreaked their natures upon Him, and He suffered it. He could have destroyed them all, if He chose, but He said: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Nor would those who were able to read the

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inner most thoughts of a person be “peering about,” be endeavoring to discover what others desired to hide. Never would they look where the demand had not been made upon them. They would take each person at his own valuation. If such a one deceived—whatever the deception—they would meet him on his own ground, striving all the time to give him a higher point of view.

There are beings who come into the world from time to time, with no marks of distinction that we, as human beings, can recognize, yet the possessors of a knowledge which we ardently desire to possess. They are never recognized, save by the very few while they are among us; but when they go, that which they have given tells us what they were. By the very character of the teachings of Jesus we recognize the nature of the being who brought them. So the teachings of Theosophy—a knowledge which is absolutely scientific, covering every department of nature, explaining all that now are mysteries—declare the nature of those beings who brought Theosophy, our Elder Brothers. And They, who have raised themselves out of our ranks, do not leave us in trouble, in darkness, in ignorance. Their desire is that we shall see, understand, know ourselves; that, quickly setting right the ideas which we hold of life, and letting right actions flow from right ideas, we may act as divine beings. However blind, however ignorant, we are not left alone, but are helped just so far as we desire and merit help, and just so far as we, with what we learn, help others who know still less than we. Unselfishness, and that alone, brings us all the gifts there are. As Jesus said: ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all the rest will be added unto you.’”

TRUE MORALITY

True morality is not a thing of words or phrases or modes of action of any kind, nor is its basis to be found in the many kinds of ideas of morality in the world, which vary as to time and place. What is "moral" at one time is "immoral" at another. There is no basis whatever in this changing attitude towards actions, changing classifications of good and evil, in a changing "division of the universe."

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Intolerance is their sure resultant; for those who pride themselves upon their own special brands of "morality" are always intolerant of others who do not accept that brand. True morality rests in an understanding and in a realization of man's own spiritual nature, and must of necessity flow from it, irrespective of all kinds of conventions. We need to know our own inner natures in order to know what is, in truth, morality.

The conventions of external life are established merely by a consensus of opinion of the beings living at any one time and in any one place. They are not necessarily based on truth, and certainly not on a perception of the whole of truth. As we may see, the best interests of all are not served by the ideas that are generally held. The world is in a tremendously evil and selfish state. With all our prevailing ideas of progress, of morality and of religion, it is not anywhere nearly so happy a place as it was perhaps a century or two ago; it is not nearly so good a place for human beings to live in as it was in the more innocent and less complex civilizations of the older nations. There is evidently something wrong with the ideas that we hold, if we find it impossible to deny the fact that instead of the world getting better and instead of life becoming more simple, the world is growing worse and life is becoming more and more complex. We should not find ourselves in the present condition if our ideas, religious and moral, flowed from the underlying basic ideas of all religions, philosophies, and systems of thought.

The basis of understanding of life accepted by the majority of Western peoples has been a revealed religion, and a personal God who revealed that religion. From this basis have sprung all our wrong conceptions. Hence the great stress laid on physical existence. In fact, one might say that the generality of human thinking is centered entirely on physical existence. The question has not even been asked, "How is it that I am born at this time, under such conditions, in this people, and not at some previous or future time, when the world might be better?" The question has not been asked, "Why are we here at all?" Nor have we asked, "What is the pre-existing cause that brought us into this relation? Was it at the whim or caprice of

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a special Being, or was it under the operation of an indwelling, inherent law within ourselves?" If we are here with our present qualities, surrounded with difficulties, not because of anything we ourselves have done, but because of the whim or caprice of some

Being, then we must regard ourselves as absolutely irresponsible for anything what ever. If we were so created, there is nothing that can undo that creation and we must suffer the consequences, the causes for which we did not set in motion!

The true ideas of the ancient philosophy relieve us of two misconceptions: one, the idea that there is a revengeful God who punishes us for those things that we are unable to prevent ourselves from doing; and second, the idea of a Devil to whom we are consigned if we do not follow the lines that some people have laid down for us. A knowledge of Theosophy enables us to understand that there never was any “creation,” in the sense of making something out of nothing; but that everything—every being of every kind—has evolved, and is still evolving. The beings below us are evolving to our estate, where the beings, now evolved so far beyond us, sometime in the distant past went through a similar stage. All beings are what they are through evolution from within outwards, that evolution proceeding under Law.

Law is operative everywhere and upon every being, because the Law is not something separate from him; it is not separate from the inner spiritual man. Law is the law of man’s own action. So, as we act along those lines that affect others for good or for evil, we necessarily receive the return from those good or evil effects which we cause others to experience. Each individual is the operator of the Law; according to his actions he gets the re-actions; according to his sowing, does he reap. In place, then, of the idea of a revengeful God, we have the ideas of absolute Justice and individual responsibility.

If, from the point of view of Law, we ask ourselves what pre-existing causes brought us into these relations, we can see that what now is must have been brought about by ourselves, and what now is is similar to what was. At once the idea is presented to our minds

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that this is not the first time, by many times, we have been in a body; that re-incarnation is the process by which human beings reach greater and greater heights; that there is no other way or means to learn all the lessons to be gained in physical life among our fellow-men, except through repeated incarnations.

We come, then, to another phase of our being—for we see there is in us something that is continuous in its operation, something which was never born and never dies. If it continues from one life to another, through many lives, and for many lives, there must be a permanency in us which no change of condition or body or circumstance can alter for a single instant. As we thus think in terms of ages rather than in the days of one short life, we begin to get a glimpse of that Reality which lies within us; we open the door so that those internal, real, more permanent perceptions can find operation in our daily waking thoughts—for every single human being has sprung from the One Great Source, is

animated by That, is, in fact, That at the very root of his being; in That is his power of perception and of action, which is spiritual and permanent. The power of perception and of action exists in everyone; the direction of that perception and action rests in each one. Each has the power to take the course which to him seems best; but, in taking the course, he sows, and must also reap as was the nature of his sowing. Every being in this universe of Law is experiencing as he is because of his own thoughts, words, and deeds; every circumstance, every misshapen day, every evil that comes to us as well as every good, is due to thought, word of deed of ours in the past. In each incarnation we find friends as well as enemies. So, our minds may be set at rest with regard to either God or Devil. Each one of us represents both the Spirit—the highest divine nature—and also, the very lowest—the infernal nature. Man is spiritual, in fact, but, thinking himself material and separate, and acting in accordance with his thinking, he brings about the battle between the two natures in him.

The great mistake of religionists in our age has been the classification of good and evil. There is nothing good in itself. There is nothing evil in itself. It is the use to which anything is put that makes it

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good or makes it evil. How can we draw a fine line between good and bad in every case? Good and evil are judged by the effects that flow from the action done, but what might seem bad in one case might be in fact the highest good, and what might seem good in another case might, in fact, lead to the greatest evil. Just a hair's line divides the Divine from the Satanic. And that hair's line consists, not in this nor in that mode of conduct, but in the clearly presented motive or intention of the one who acts. A good motive can never produce altogether evil results, and yet a good motive is not enough. We may have the best motive in the world, but if we have not also knowledge and wisdom, we may unintentionally do a wrong thing when we intended to do good; and sometimes we may do a good thing when we intended to do evil. Thus, true morality may be seen to lie not in the act itself, but in the motive; it depends on the knowledge and intelligence of the being acting.

The lines of true morality may go anywhere, but by this is not meant that we do evil that good may come! How could we do evil if our perception is good, if our knowledge is clear, if our motive is unquestioned and without self-interest? No imaginable evil could flow under such conditions, which are of the nature of the Spirit. The widest range of intelligence and wisdom are required to make it possible for no evil effects to flow even if good is intended. Wisdom is always required, because the very nature and essence of our being is wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom. There is nothing higher than that essence of our being, and we may consciously gain it by first setting aside all those ideas that conflict with it, and then, acting from the

basis of our spiritual nature, from the basis of absolute, unerring Law. Once these ideas are held in mind to the exclusion of all other separative ideas, unity of Spirit, unity of thought and unity of action take place.

This great philosophy of Theosophy, then, presents a basis from which the truest kind of morality can be perceived. True morality does not depend upon words, phrases, or conventions, but upon a universal perception of all things, whereby everything is done for good, every thought and feeling expended for the benefit of others

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rather than for one's self. A clear perception of one's own spiritual nature, and the motive to benefit mankind in every direction and in every case, without self-interest, are the two essentials for true morality. True morality is, in fact, a universal existence, and the beginning of it is in the desire to live to benefit mankind without self-interest or hope of any reward whatever; then, to practice and to help those who know still less than we do.

This is quite the reverse of prevailing religious ideas of personal salvation, yet this universal existence is our salvation. At once, when these universal ideas are seen and to some extent realized, one loses all fears. Neither change nor death, nor things present or to come, can have any effect upon that one. He meets conditions as they come, does what he can, and lets other conditions succeed them. He moves through life, far from an unhappy being, quite capable of taking all the joy and pleasure that exist in the world—all that upon which his fellow-men only subsist or hope to subsist. He moves among his fellow-men, understanding everything that they are going through, enjoying with their joy and sorrowing when they sorrow, yet himself free from either joy or sorrow. When we arrive at that condition, our sense of morality will be based on the nature of man. We shall then look on each and every being as of the same kind as ourselves, differing only in degree of understanding. There cannot be in us anything but tolerance and mercy, for we shall know we cannot judge others in their struggles; we cannot say that there is good in this case, bad in that; we shall understand that goodness and badness are entirely relative in men, while they perceive the Reality not at all; we shall see that the best thing we can do for anyone is to assist him to understand himself, so that he may reach that point of perception and knowledge and power which is, in reality, his own and which he has but to realize.

Man's false conceptions of life are what prevent him from knowing the truth, and it is evident that the first step towards true perception lies in throwing aside the prejudices and predilections he has lived by. And there is always help. Never have we been, left alone. Always there are beings greater in evolution than we, who return to

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this field of physical existence to help us, to wake us up to a perception of our natures. Such has been the mission of all Divine Incarnations down the ages. Those beings have come and lived among us, have become “in all things like unto us,” as was said of Jesus, in order that the human words They spoke should be words we would understand. They meet us on the basis of our ideas and try to clarify them and set them in a true course. They can do nothing to stop what we have done and what we want to do; They cannot interfere; but They can help us to see the right direction, if we are so willed; They can give help when we turn to that direction which They indicate—that Path which They themselves followed so many ages ago. Always They try to help us, even when we are proceeding along wrong lines and bringing upon ourselves the suffering such wrong lines entail—even then They try to direct the results into a better channel. They hold back the awful Karma that would shake the world, and let the effects come so gradually that we can stand and bear them. That is part of the protective power of the spiritual nature, and it operates in every direction.

It is for us, then, to say which way we shall go. We are not creatures of circumstance. We are not the creatures of environment. We are their creators. It is for us to see that we think right, that we build right, that we build upon the strong foundation of the eternal verities, and that we keep our eyes upon that Path which the great Masters of Wisdom have sought to open before us. So, in our turn we shall point out the Way among the hosts who are moving in delusion and ignorance, and as we help each one, we help ourselves. As we help ourselves by helping others, we raise all.

THE STOREHOUSE OF THOUGHT

When we consider the idea of thought we must remember that there cannot be thought without a thinker. There are no thoughts that arise of themselves; they are all produced by intelligent beings, no matter what kind of thoughts they are.

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We are all thinkers, and we all assume that we have minds, but of what does the mind consist? What we call our mind is not, in reality, mind at all. The mind itself is the power to think. The bundles of ideas that we call our minds are the products of the thinking faculty; they are the effects of intelligent ideation, and we have to get further and further back from the effects perceived to the causes of those effects.

Mind itself is not limited; we all have the unlimited power to think in any and all directions. But we all are born into or come in contact with different sets of ideas which we consciously or unconsciously adopt and cling to. Yet we ought to recognize and realize from the very outset that we are not those ideas, because we have the power to

“change our minds”; if we were in fact our ideas, we could not change them, could never get a new idea nor expel an old one.

We think that our ideas are our own; but, when we come to self-analysis, we find that as a matter of fact not one in a million is an independent Thinker who creates his thoughts from a realization of the universality of nature and the common source from which we all derive or draw what seem to be our separate powers. It is strange that we do not see that there is a common source for us all, and for all our powers; that only the use of life and the life-powers differ in each, according to the ideas each one holds. We all have the power to think, and we all think differently, and that makes us seem to be different.

We live in a world of effects, overwhelmed mentally by them, unable to extricate ourselves from them. So, what is most needed in the world is a realization of what our own real nature is. If we find what our own real nature is, then we shall know what the real nature of every other being is, whether that other being is below us in point of intelligence, or as far above us as has yet been attained by any being.

If we are ever going to know anything of the common Source of all our being and of all our powers, we have to gain that knowledge within ourselves. For no one is separate from It; each one springs from the same Supreme, is one with It in his inner most nature. The

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idea is beyond any conception of the Deity as people hold God today, or that has been popularly held in the past.

The Supreme is beyond form. It is beyond expression. Where is the man who can say what That is within himself which sees, which knows, which feels, which experiences, which garners the results of all experience? Each one is of that Infinite Source, because all have the same infinite root; each one is an expression of It.

If a man does not understand what his real Source is, what his real nature is, and assumes himself to be that which he is not, then all his exercise of the power to think, all his creative thoughts, all his subsequent actions, will follow the lines of his wrong basis of thought and action. If he thinks he is a poor miserable sinner who cannot do anything of himself and for himself, then a poor, miserable sinner he will remain. But if he realizes that all the effects which surround him are due to thinking, that he can create better effects, that all things are within his reach, he will gain a new insight and a greater strength. He gets beyond effects to the field of causes, and begins to realize that all things are alike in essential nature. He finds from that consideration that the universe is under Law. The very highest being is under law, just the same as the very lowest. That Law does not exist outside of us, and is not put in motion by some being or beings outside us, but is inherent in each. As we act, we experience the reaction; as we think, so are we. In

accordance with the intelligence of our action, so will be the expression returning to us. 'ye sow, so shall ye also reap;' as we are reaping, so we must have sown.

We have there the first and final expression of Justice: that we reap what we have sown. In whatever conditions we may find ourselves, we have to admit that they are our own productions. How were they originally produced? By the thoughts of the thinker based on a false conclusion. The power of the Supreme is in every one. No matter what the man thinks, there is power in it; and if he holds to that thinking he is bound to produce the effects that flow from the lines of his special endeavor. If he is creating things that perish, if he is creating things that do not relate to his own true nature—if his power to think is wrapped up in the things that have to do only with

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his body or the bodily surroundings, or his physical advancement—is it any wonder that soon or late we find ourselves in a complex situation and with such usually disastrous consequences to ourselves? We are bewildered by the very effects that we have produced by our thinking based upon wrong ideas.

We have then to beware that we do not set the power of our spiritual nature in a personal direction, for personal, selfish ends; such will only bring reaction upon us, of necessity. Each one has pursued his own individual path, as if he were separate from all the rest, and so has created the conditions under which he exists, the experiences that bring him suffering or enjoyment.

We have considered that good and evil are things in themselves. They are not. There is nothing good in itself; there is nothing evil in itself. Good and evil are the effects felt by us. What is good to one may be evil to another. It depends on the recipient, on his attitude of mind. If we see that Law rules and recognize that these effects were produced by ourselves, that we receive the exact return of causes set in motion by ourselves, then we see that whatever we do or have done affects others either for good or evil, and that we must in the nature of things in time pay that debt incurred or receive back the benefit conferred. The good that comes is what we have earned through service to others. The evil that befalls us is also what we have earned, by lack of service or by injury to others—every effect is the continuation of the cause set in motion by ourselves.

There is the true idea to be established in us—that of our individual responsibility to all others for the use of our powers. In it is implied the Spiritual Identity of all beings, the divinity of every being that exists—not only of mankind—the good and bad natures there—but every being below us, as well as every being above us. This presents the fact that all powers—of perception, of experience, of knowledge, of wisdom—lie for each being within himself, in his inmost nature. And it brings instantly to our minds the idea of development, of unfoldment, of evolution, for every being high or low. There are

embryonic souls below us in their various stages of progress; there are the souls of men with their varying degrees of develop-

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ment; and there are Great Souls—Men who have gone through the stages we are now passing through. The whole universe is made up of beings. The form is the home, the instrument, of some minor or greater intelligence. No intelligence, no form; no intelligence, no action of any kind, no responsibilities of any kind. Wherever you find actions and conditions, there you get intelligence, and where ever there is intelligence there is responsibility, whether recognized or not. So that the universe exists for one purpose, and for one purpose only—for the Soul's experience and emancipation.

Soul means the acquired experience of the Spiritual Being. In the vast universe, with such an innumerable and immeasurable range of intelligent beings, differing infinitely in their respective degrees of acquired intelligence, or Soul, where or what would be the Storehouse of Thought?

In this vast assemblage of beings there are many, many kinds of thought. There are the thoughts or ideas of all the men now on earth and of those who have been; the thoughts or expressions of the beings below man; the ideas and still wider expressions of the beings above man. All these make a vast storehouse; but no one of us can draw from that storehouse any more, nor any different than he puts himself in a position to receive. He must make room for it. All that we perceive directly is ideas. Behind all action is thought of some kind. It is the kind of ideas we hold that makes us do everything—good or evil.

Now we can see how important it is that we should know what we really are—become acquainted with our own nature— and have that as a basis of our thought and action. Upon the quality of thought depends the quality or kind of action. It is all a sequence, and so what is needed is an orderly succession of thoughts based on our true natures, and action in accordance with them. Then everything flows along the line of divine unfoldment, of divine evolution; then we are working in accord with nature, in accord with all others.

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE SOUL

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. 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 representation 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,

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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

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feeling and thought 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 colors of the spectrum; they are also pointed to in the seven notes of the scale of music.

The notes and colors 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 colors are derived. Our colors 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 colors; we know that there are other octaves of color 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.

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,

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and that language is one of color, 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 colors and shades of colors produced by the action. The same with any uttered sounds or speech, no matter what—the centers in the body are set in motion, each having its own particular tell-tale colors and rates of vibration.

Strange as it may seem to us, colors 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 colors 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 colors. 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 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

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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 uses and apply his powers.

Theosophy endeavors 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;

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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 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 fellowmen; 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.

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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 himself 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 awhile. 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.

THEOSOPHY IN DAILY LIFE

Many people think that religion means a preparation for death or the states of the future. Religion really means a preparation for and a knowledge of life—a living of our life as it should be lived. That which prepares for death is life, and ever living. Formal religions

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do not even answer the question, why is death—nor any of the other burning questions in daily life. Why do we have suffering and sorrow? Why are we here? What was the origin of man? Why so many different conditions among mankind; why are some born to sorrow, and others to joy; why some in lowly places, some in high; why some with great faculties and others with very few and poor ones? Justice demands an answer which is not furnished by religion, with its "Creator"—for if man is the creature of a creator, he cannot help himself and is absolutely irresponsible. Any being, if "perfect," would maintain justice; yet there are injustices among men. The caprice or whim of a creator does not explain the difficulty. Any being, however great or high, must of necessity be limited, finite, and imperfect—something outside us, something which does not contain the universe but is contained by it.

We have to go behind any idea of a Being, to the source of all being—to a basis common to the highest and to the lowest being. That basis and source is not to be found by looking outward at all, but is the very power to perceive, wherever there is life. Spirit, Life, Consciousness are the same in every being—undivided, however many and varied the perceptions. Evolution is not a compelling force from without, but the impelling force of Spirit from within, urging on to better and better expression. All advancement is from within. All the knowledge that we gain, all the experience that we obtain, is obtained and held within. Each one, then, is the Seer; all the rest are seen. So, the knowledge that we have to obtain is not information from without, not the thoughts of other men, but an understanding of our own essential nature, which represents every element in the great universe, from the basis of all life to every outward expression, and every possibility of further expression— just as each drop of water contains in itself everything existing in the great ocean from which it came. Nor does Law exist outside of us. Law is always inherent in Spirit; it is the action which brings re-action in every individual case, and to the collective mass of humanity. We are here under law and under justice. There is no such thing as injustice in the universe.

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Knowing something as to our essential nature, knowing something of the purpose of life, and that life is all made up of learning, knowing that the universe is all alive, and that there is in reality no injustice save that which we inflict upon ourselves by re-action,

we would take an entirely different view of life and put these ideas into daily practice. We would take the position which most of all we need to take—that of our own responsibility, which religions have taught us to shift on to some God or devil. Recognizing that each one of us is from the same Source and going towards the same goal, though the path will vary with the pilgrim, we will act toward each one as if he were a part of ourselves. Like us, each one is moving onward— perhaps below us, possibly above. From the one above, we can obtain help. To the one below, we can give help. Such is the interdependence which should exist between all conscious beings; and under such a conception our civilization would not be as it is now. We should not find every man's hand raised against every other man. We should not see those in poor case finding fault with the wrong conditions, but finding fault rather with their own wrong relations to others at some time when they abused the power they had. We should see each one trying to discipline himself, trying to bring himself into proper relation with all the rest—not so much outwardly, perhaps, as inwardly; for we may be sure that if we make clean the inside of the bowl, the outside will take care of itself. We have no greater duty to perform than to make clear and clean our natures—to make them true, to make them in accord with the great object of all life, the evolution of soul.

We cannot wait to make our start in this direction until the nation wakes up to Theosophy; for the nation will itself awake only when each individual wakes up to that which is in himself and by his thought and action instills a similar thought and action in other human beings. Supposing each one determined to do all he could for every other one wherever he could, do you think that anybody would suffer? Not one! There would be more to help than those to suffer. But we are afraid that if we so act, the other man will not. So, we do not move at all along that line. The majority of people are thinking

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about quite other things. They are busy at the shrine of their gods of comfort, seeking to get the best of everything in life at the expense of someone else. Or they are seeking to acquire "the power of will," so that they can get something for nothing from someone else. That is the kind of "will" which is generally desired, its object being the getting of exactly what one pleases. Is not this psychic banditry? Anything gotten that way is taken from another, and we shall have to pay it back to the uttermost farthing—if not in this life, then in some other, for the scales of justice are unerring.

Do we not see that we can trust a universe that moves along unerringly under the law of perfect justice? 'We certainly can. We can go forward with an absolute reliance on the law of our own spiritual being, knowing whatever conditions come are necessary for us, knowing that those very things we feel so hardly are object lessons for us because they indicate a wrong tendency or defect in us which this present distress affords us an opportunity to overcome, to strengthen our true character. That is all we have at the end

of life, whatever of character—good, bad, or indifferent—we have acquired. Men spend their lives trying to avoid what they do not like, and trying to get what they like—what they can and while they can. Yet if they got all the wealth of the world, every possession and every possible desire, what good would it do them? At death everything would be left where they got it, because nothing adheres to Spirit. The idea of getting for themselves is one of the false notions which prevent men from understanding themselves as spiritual beings and using the power which belongs to them—for all powers of every kind—electrical, dynamic or explosive—come from the One Universal Spirit, and each man has latent in him all the powers in the universe. Physical life is not necessarily a vale of sorrow. The time must come when we shall have made man's life on earth what it ought to be, when we shall have no fear of anything, when we shall not be afraid of our fellowmen. It was said of Daniel, when he entered the lions' den, the beasts of prey did not touch him at all. Why? Because his heart was pure. He had no harm in it for anyone. He trusted to the spiritual law of his own being, and all nature makes

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obeisance to that. We could go out calmly, courageously, happily, relying on the laws of our own natures. If we did so, we would bring our daily lives in line with that nature; for there is nothing of our action which does not come from the mind, and back of the mind is the 'motive we have in acting. Motive is what makes our actions really "good" or "bad." If we are righteous in ourselves and desirous of doing right, then all that we do will flow rightly from us and every function will be a righteous function. All action springs from and is colored by the motive held in performing it.

Theosophy is the only philosophy that can be used in every direction in daily life. It can be used in all directions, high or low, because that use comes from an understanding of the Spirit itself, from acting for that Self and as that Self—for the Self acts only through the creatures. Acting for and as that Self in every direction, all else flows into line. All the destruction that is around us, all the misery that we see, has been brought about through our denial of the Holy Ghost—our denial of the Spirit within us. We deny it when we act as if we are our bodies, or our minds. THAT will not be denied. So, man, meeting all the results of that denial and seeing them to be evil, learns that this is not the way. Then he seeks for Truth, and finding the truth, obtains all that he can desire—hope, happiness and a better understanding of his and all existence. It was to give to men all they could take in regard to the nature of the soul—that they might come out from this vale of sorrow—that those Beings known as Divine Incarnations have descended here of Their own will. They have carried forward from age to age this knowledge of nature and of man and of the purpose of life, learned through many civilizations of mankind. It is this knowledge which makes Them as gods to us in Their glory and power.

THREE KINDS OF FAITH

Every human being has faith—faith in something, some ideal, some conception, some religion, some formula—but while the faiths of different people have one or another object, the faith itself proceeds

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from the Highest, and is inherent in the heart of every being. Faith is the very basis of our nature. Whatever way we follow is because of the faith we have—the conviction that it is the best way. That the world is full of false faiths is because of the differing ideas, beliefs and philosophies which limit faith itself to the means thought necessary for obtaining a particular object of faith.

In the seventeenth chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita faith is said to be of three kinds: faith of the quality called sattwa, the good and the true; faith of the quality called rajas, of action, and of passion; and faith of the quality called tames, of indifference and ignorance. These three qualities given to faith are, in fact, the three limitations placed on faith by every human being; for the power of faith in itself is limitless. We continually limit that power to its operation within the range of some minor object or ideal based on externalities. “The embodied soul being gifted with faith; each man is of the same nature as that ideal on which his faith is fixed.” Man has that quality of faith in accordance with his disposition; and he also continually becomes of the nature of the ideal on which his faith is fixed. It is evident, then, that we ought to be sure of the nature of the faith upon which our ideal is placed.

If one places his faith on any externality, whatever it may be—gods or men, religions or systems of thought—he has placed it upon a broken reed; he has limited the very power of his own spirit to expand itself beyond the limitations of his ideal. When, for instance, we accept the idea that nothing is real but that which we can see or hear or taste or smell or touch, we have placed our faith on a very low basis. There is some reason for our falsity of thought and action, when we have assumed the present moment to be the only moment, the outward terrestrial world and this one existence to be the only life, from which we go, we know not where, nor to what purpose it all has been. To look on all beings according to one’s own limitation of mind and range of perception, and to see only their externalities of speech or action in accordance, is not seeing them as they really are. An outside God, or an outside devil, an outside Law, an outside atonement for sins, the idea of sin being other than a denial of our

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own spiritual nature (the unpardonable sin), are All external faiths of the nature of tamas, or ignorance. Ignorance always leads to superstition. Superstition leads to false belief, and false belief to false faith.

We are all in constant conflict with each other because of false bases of faith, for the very reason that faith fixed on anything will bring results, and men are blinded to real and true faith by the results of even false faith. Yet so long as we have a false faith shall we continue to create for ourselves lives of misery. The results flowing from a false faith in a selfish ideal must bring us bad effects in wrong conditions. They are the very limitations we have imposed upon ourselves by external faiths in other lives, and we must come again and again into bodies until we have rid ourselves of the defects in our nature which those external faiths have engendered. We have to get a better basis for thought and action than the false faith of the likes and dislikes we have obtained by heredity. We have produced the effects we see, but we need not go on repeating the same mistakes life after life, if we will but change our ideals. We have to find a true basis of faith. We have to place our faith upon that which is not external, but internal.

The Internal is the very source of the powers that we possess of every kind, and that Internal is the same in every living one. At the very root of our being is that changeless Self which we can know only within ourselves. To reach in and in to It, we must first divest ourselves of all our ideas—of everything which changes. First of all, let man divest himself of the idea that he is his body. He occupies it; he uses it; but he knows that it is ever changing, that never for one single instant is it the same as it was the moment before. Let him divest himself further of the idea that he is his mind; for he himself can change the ideas that compose it—throw them out bodily and take their very opposite, if he chooses—yet he is still acting with other ideas. We are not bodies; we are not minds; nor are we both together; but we are That which uses and sustains them both. Through all the changes of the past and present, and those that are to come, we shall always be ourselves. Even when death comes, we

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shall still be operating in another way than in the physical body. The basis of the Changeless Self places the whole universe within the reach of any being's mind—a stable basis for thought and action and realization within himself.

These three things we have to know: Each one is the Self in his innermost nature; every power that he has arises in that Self; every being of every kind is conscious, with the power of the extension of its range of perception and action, while every instrument is due to the limitation of the conception of the individual's real nature. Never by looking at other beings, nor by any kind of faith whatever can man realize his oneness with the One Great Life; he can realize it only by looking into his own nature. His own nature is realized by seeing that which is not the nature of the Self. For anything seen, heard, or felt, or tasted or perceived is not the Self, but merely a perception of the Self. The Self perceives what may be perceived according to its own ideas, according to its own faith, but that which is perceived is never the Self. Within every being from whom we obtain

any action or from whom we perceive anything, there is the Self, but we do not perceive That. It is only by realizing It within ourselves that we realize its existence in every other being. Then honor the spiritual nature of every being and strive to aid that being to see for himself the true path by which he can realize his true nature! We all have to think and act with that true nature as our guide. We find ourselves prevented on every hand from taking the position of the true nature—it seems impossible. But this is only a delusion born from the false faith we have held. We have established ideas, likes and dislikes, and feelings which under the law of the return of impressions recur again and again. The moment we attempt to take an opposite stand we meet the result of the combined action of all these forces within ourselves. This is what we may call “the war in heaven” —the war in the man’s own nature. But if he remains true to his own spiritual nature, he is bound to be the conqueror. If he has faith in the law of his own nature, he will go forward and gradually the obstacles will disappear. But we must hold on grimly and have confidence and faith in That which is the only

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Real anywhere—Life itself Consciousness. Then the fetters we have made for ourselves will fall away. Every force in nature begins to act for us and with us because we have no desire of our own, but only for the good, for the salvation of all. Every soul and every thing seems to work for our advantage, but not because we want it. We begin to see the spiritual meaning of the saying that the man who desires to save his life must lose it. He gives up everything as an acquisition for himself, devoting every power he has or gains to the service of others, and the whole universe is before him. He can take all—but let him take nothing save to give it out again, accept nothing save to lay it at the feet of others!

There is no question of sin, or sinner. There is no question of good or evil. There is only the question: Are you working for yourself as you understand yourself, or are you working for the Self as you ought to understand you are, and not for anything else? If you want nothing for yourself, require nothing for this body, but think only to do for others, what is needed comes under the law of the very force for which you make attraction. Support comes in every direction. The whole nature—spiritual, intellectual, psychical, astral and physical—is strengthened; even the surroundings are improved. It is our lack of faith—our Unfaith in That, which puts us where we would not be. Denying the Christ within, the Krishna within, the Spirit within, is “the unpardonable sin,” and so long as we crucify that Christ within, just so long will we suffer on the cross of human passions and desires. Service for ourselves is a creation which ties us fast to wrong conditions. We may strive for better bodies, better positions, for possessions of all kinds, better qualities, better understanding on one condition only, that the motive be to make ourselves the better able to help and teach others.

The only true faith is that in the Highest—in the Changeless, in That which each in his innermost nature is. The only true path is the trusting to the law of our own spiritual nature. Men may go from faith to faith, from faith in one thing to faith in some other thing,

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moving along from life to life and obtaining some results according to the nature of the ideal upon which their faith is fixed, but the only way out is through the faith in the spiritual, essential nature of all beings. And no greater gift could be given to any human being than the inalienable fact that he—and each one—has the power to realize it. This is a part of the ancient knowledge known by a few, followed by a few, which They have ever brought into a world of false faiths and tried to teach the people in general.

Those who follow the Path of true faith are not drawn away from their fellow-men. One's fellow-men are more to him than they ever were before. He sees more in them. He sees more clearly the difficulties under which they labor, and desires to help them in every way. So he is more of a living man. He acts more knowingly than do the rest. He gets more from nature than they do, because he sees the whole and the aspects of the individuals that compose the whole. He gets as much out of this life and more, far more, than the man who lives for enjoyment, for happiness, whose ambition is for himself. But he lives not for himself. The whole aim of his life is that men may know these truths; for he knows that knowledge means the destruction of false faiths, and hence of all the suffering and horrors of physical existence. Then, evolution will go on by leaps and bounds. Men will be extricated from the places to which they have consigned themselves, and move on without limit in a universe of infinite possibilities.

When all our false beliefs, our desires and passions, our likes and dislikes have fallen away from us like cast-off garments, and we have resumed that nature of us which is divine, then we shall be able to build a civilization as much higher than this as we can possibly imagine. For we cannot get away from the Karma of the race to which we belong, and those effects which have been produced by us together, we must work out together. The best way, the highest way, and the surest way, is to proceed along the line of our own inner nature, and, so doing, give the suggestion to others by which they

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may realize their inner nature. Then, dwelling on That which is immortal, changeless, limitless, which is our very self and the Self of all creatures, the realization will come—little by little, but it will surely come.

PLANETARY INFLUENCES

The philosophy of Theosophy covers all things in manifestation and points out the relations of each thing to every other. Our personal purview extends over our own interests—our religion, our system of thought, our ideas—and moving along those lines within narrow limits, we finally reach the place where we are living entirely for ourselves, making use of all the efforts, thoughts, and ideas of others solely that we ourselves may benefit. We need to raise our eyes and our minds to the wider view of what the great universe itself is.

This Earth is a planet, as we all know. But there are also other planets quite as likely to be inhabited as is this planet. So, too, this solar system of ours is but one of innumerable solar systems in the universe. All are parts of the vast whole; all are consequently related. There was a time when the knowledge of these relationships existed, when they were taught in the ancient temples as part of the Great Initiation. That was the true Astrology—not the Astrology of the present day, which has lost the ancient knowledge just as the true meaning of religion has become lost in the course of time. For just as there are some sorry remnants of religious knowledge in the world today, so the remnants of astrological knowledge are almost entirely applied to the personality in physical life, considering with chart and table the effects of planetary influence merely upon the physical affairs of men. The physical is but one line of effect—the only line, if we believe planets to be mere physical embodiments. But there are other sides to the nature of planets, which we must understand, if we are to get any true idea of planetary influence.

All beings and all forms of every kind are constituted of many different “principles.” For instance, connected with man himself

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there is his body; there is the mind that he uses; there are powers which he exercises; and there is himself—the perceiver, the knower, the experiencer, who through his mind, his powers, his body, learns. It is apparent, then, that there are other departments of our body than the physical, to be affected by any influence; and, if there is a physical effect of planetary influence, as there must of necessity be, we shall have to inquire also into its effect upon *all* these departments of our nature.

Not only is man constituted of seven distinct principles, but also all planets are septenary in their natures. There is a spiritual “something,” a psychic “something,” an intellectual “something,” an astral “something,” and a physical “something,” in every planet. Planets are not merely physical things, any more than we as human beings are merely bodies. Beings of various classes constitute every planet and its inhabitants, just

as our planet is constituted of the various beings belonging to the four kingdoms, from which it derives its own peculiar influence. Let us, then, consider something of the nature of these planets with which we are most intimately connected, if we would gain any idea as to the real meaning of planetary influence.

The Sun is the life-giver of our particular solar system. The Sun shines on all the planets, but the effects received differ for each planet according to the conditions presented. The Sun is the central store-house of our system and the focus for physical life, but it has also other constituents which apply to our intellectual or psychic, astral and spiritual constituents. At one and the same time, we might say, the Sun is the giver of life physical and life spiritual, if we understand that we are not referring to the mere physical Sun, which is, correspondingly, just what our bodies are—only that principle which we perceive objectively. Yet all the other principles are present, their influence flowing out upon us; from them we get whatever we are able to take. So we see there is not only a direct influence of the Sun on the Earth itself, but also upon us as peoples of Earth.

The Moon, the nearest planet to us, influences us physically, astrally and psychically, for of like nature are the forces in the Moon. Even the phases of the Moon have their particular influence upon us,

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as noted in the case of “lunatics,” who are rendered more insane at certain phases. The Moon’s influence is observable also in the lower kingdoms—the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal—as well as on ourselves, self-conscious beings.

Other planets still nearer to the Sun, as Mercury, for example, have still greater influence. Mercury receives seven times as much light from the Sun as the Earth, and has seven times as much—other things. Venus, standing next in order of nearness to the Sun, receives twice the light that Earth receives and also shines by her own light. It is not a wise conclusion of our scientists that, because any given planet is nearer the Sun than we are, its climate and conditions would make the sustaining of life thereon impossible. Life always adjusts itself to whatever conditions exist. Hence, bodies and ideas connected with the state of matter due to the nearness of the Sun would exactly fit those existing conditions. Thus, we may look upon the various planets as brothers of our own—members of one great humanity scattered in different portions of the great universe—belonging to the same family, but working under different conditions. All have their direct effects upon us, the influence of one planet predominating over another in accordance with the angle of position. Some planets are beneficial in their influence; others are called malevolent in their effects upon man. WE stand as individuals in the

midst of a great mass of beings in every direction in our solar system and beyond—all moving in the same direction, all springing from the same Source. However much the *path* of each humanity and of each individual differ, the Source and Goal are the same for all.

We are influenced by other planets just as we are influenced by other people in our daily walks in life. What is it that causes others to influence us against our own good will, our own right perceptions? Nothing but our mistaken ideas as to what we are, and our suppositions that we can be thus affected, our attitude toward ideas, toward people, toward things, toward life in general. We think that conditions and circumstances bring us to whatever state we are in. That is not true. It is not the conditions nor the circumstances, but the attitude we hold toward them, which matters; the true attitude held

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with regard to our own natures gives us the power to withstand any influence whatever. According to our attitude, and according to our understanding that all things material and physical evolve from and are ruled by the spiritual, will we—the real Thinkers—receive the effect of any planet. Neither good nor evil can come to us unless there is good or evil within ourselves. If we are good, no evil can touch us. If we are evil, then, for the time, no good can touch us. All states are within ourselves, as we ought to understand by seeing that one gets good effects and another bad effects from precisely the same set of circumstances. We are not the victims of circumstances, save as we make ourselves the victims.

A true understanding of planetary influence would involve an absolute realization of man's nature in all his constituents, in every principle and every element, which are those of the solar system to which he belongs. Each one of us is a copy of the great universe. Each one of us is connected with every class of beings. We have within us every form of consciousness and every state of substance, and if we understand ourselves, we can move in accord with all the rest, every influence coming our way, or even perceptible to us, only an aid by which we may do good to others. Then we shall be neither oppressed nor elevated by any influences; we can be repressed or oppressed only by our own erroneous thought, will, feelings and actions. We have established a daily tabernacle which has its peculiarities, but it is of our own establishing—built by our own thoughts and doings, and by those of no one else. It was not imposed upon us by any "Being," nor, in fact, was it necessary, except as we were ignorant, and effects flowed through our ignorance. Now, we can either *learn*, or maintain the condition through continued ignorance.

The fact that at any given time or place we are subject to certain beneficial or malevolent influences, that we were born as persons at a certain time and place, under certain conjunctions of the planets means only fulfillments of Karmic law. We could not have come through any "holes in the sky" except those we had made for ourselves; we could not have made a place of entrance at certain conjunctions of the planets, except the conditions for us were there at

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that time and at no other time. Planetary influences express our *tendencies*, yes; but there is no "God" above to compel us, and there is no possibility of our being pushed into following certain wrong tendencies unless we want to be pushed. If we have made up our minds not to be so influenced, then we cannot be: we simply do not follow those tendencies in ourselves which we have discovered to be wrong. So, we make another kind of birth possible.

So-called astrological prognostications of the present day relate chiefly to the body and its environment, and on that basis, people seek only for good, trying to dodge sickness and evil. On the basis of our own true natures we should not seek for good, nor even to *be* good. We should seek to *do* good, and then we *are* good. We are not trying for any reward, but only to make ourselves efficient ministers of good to others. Because we are not creating evil, we do not have to avoid evil. Wherever and whenever we give forth evil we receive the effects of evil; whenever and wherever we give forth good, we receive the effects of good. Each one is absolutely and unconditionally responsible for the condition in which he finds himself. To blame planetary influences for this or that condition is as foolish as to blame the water for drowning a man whose own carelessness, and not the water, was responsible for the drowning. But the same laws govern other planets than ours, and we do make of ourselves magnets which draw to ourselves like things in operation at any given time anywhere. If we are subject to despondency in ourselves, for instance, we shall certainly receive all the effects that despondent conditions anywhere put upon us. This is the nature of our interdependence and interrelation with every other being in our solar system.

It remains for man to see and *realize* that he has within him all the elements of the great ocean of Life. It remains for him, in that realization, to *act* as one who understands all the rest, and who sends out benefit in every direction for those knowing still less than he does.

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WORK FOR THEOSOPHY

IT IS FUTILE TO ACCEPT revelations on anybody's say-so. They convey no knowledge, and it is actual knowledge that is required by each one. Shibboleths and formulas are mere words, not a criterion of truth. Theosophy is in the world to present the means by which each one can acquire knowledge for himself. Its study and application call forth the judgment and discrimination latent in the man himself. Truth is not a man, nor a book, nor a statement. The nature of Truth is *universal*; its possessors in any degree will be found to be applicers of universality in thought, speech and action. Their efforts will be for humanity regardless of sex, creed, caste or color. They will never be found among those claiming to be the chosen spokesman of the Deity—and exacting homage from their fellow-men: true Brotherhood includes the least developed as well as the very highest. We must seek to give aid to *all* in search of truth. Our value and aid in this great work will be just what we make them by our motive, our judgment, our conduct. The heart-felt desire that others may benefit from our lives will be felt by those open—it matters little how few; they may be the means of wakening many others. It is the effort and the sacrifice that bring the ultimate results, but in our zeal, it is well to consider what the Masters have done, and do year after year, age after age. They do what They can, when They can, and as They can—in accordance with cyclic law. They conserve the knowledge gained—and *wait*. Knowing this, and doing thus, there can be no room in us for doubt or discouragement. Theosophy is for those who *want* it.

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We are to hold, wait, and work for those few earnest souls who will grasp the plan and further the Cause. Many have their ears so dulled, or their attention so diverted, that no number of repetitions can reach them—yet Theosophy must be held out continually for all who will listen. That is our self-assumed work; we have our example in H.P.B. and W.Q.J.—as to means, method and manner: let us imitate them, and so do their work in their spirit.

The Theosophical “arch” has been thrown across the abyss of creeds and materialism. Some have discovered where a base rests on one or the other side; others have found “stones” that belong to the arch, but the “key-stone” has been “rejected” because of its irregular shape—all like the story of old in masonic tradition. But we are also reminded that the time came when the rejected stone became “the head of the corner” because it was found to be the keystone. All the time there were those who knew of the key-stone, but they were very few and their voices were not heard amid the clamor of the claims made by those who had found portions of the arch and desired recognition. So, the few

had to “Work, Watch—and Wait,” knowing that history repeats itself, and that there is nothing new under the sun.

The allegory of the tower of Babel applies to the present times. Everything is in confusion, everyone talking his own gibberish — and nobody listening. I said “nobody” — but some are; a few realize that none of these things bring knowledge. All that can be done is to let the light so shine that all who will may seek it, thus sowing for future harvest. It would be a hopeless task were it not for Reincarnation; so, the great effort should be to promulgate the fundamental principles of Unity, of Brotherhood, of Karma and Reincarnation.

In the work which we have undertaken together, it matters not whether “we” fail or succeed: Our purpose has been and will be that the Work shall go on. We can throw — each one of us — our best into the effort; the rest is in other and stronger hands. Our

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“best” may not be great, but if the motive is there, even to hold our ground is victory in some contingencies.

It is, then, to the Teachings that attention has to be called — not to ourselves who are only handing them on as best we can. If one sees that in many ways, he is not able to do all that needs to be done, or that he would like to accomplish, it is evidence that he is in the way of improving. Our ideals are never reached: they continually *precede* us. As a man thinks, so he becomes. Time is an element in this, and it is shortened by *patient* doing of *what we can*. To be in the least cast down by our apparent imperfections is a form of impatience—a disregard of Law. Whatever comes is right—until something better appears. Observed defects will fade out under observation, so we can cheerfully bear with our own defects as well as with those of others, while we go right on working.

One of the greatest helps that Theosophy gives is the power to take a wider survey of the field of action than is otherwise possible: we do not look on this life only, but on many future lives during which “I and thou and all the princes of the earth” will live and strive for the universal redemption of mankind—ever looking ahead, ever seeing further heights toward which the awakening spirit may be directed. There is much strength, there are many faculties among men and mostly used without direction of a permanent nature. Could right philosophy be implanted—even the single idea of the Divine nature in man—a greater impetus would be given to right living; then, a philosophy in accord with this nature would be sought by those so quickened.

It would not take so long, nor be so difficult, if those who are interested in Theosophy would stop figuring it out for *themselves*, and get busy in spreading the philosophy and the idea of service. Without the right philosophy, strength and especial faculties are useless. If all study so as to be the better able to help and teach others, there must result a general gain and help. I think that the word "Theosophy" has power: if it had not, there would not be so many misusing the name. In spite of all these, Theosophy itself is untouched. Our work is to keep it pure as it was delivered to us, for the sake of

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those who *can* be helped—and we are finding some all the time. In better days we will be able to do more—and all the better because of present difficulties. Theosophy pure and simple is the standard by which efforts may be applied and errors combated, so it must always be kept in evidence as the source of all right effort. Perfection in action is not possible; so, while showing forth the spirit of the Movement only, we yet present a *visible* basis necessary in any exoteric work. "U.L.T." is a *name given to certain principles and ideas*; those who associate themselves with those principles and ideas are attracted and *bound by them only*—not by their fellows who do likewise or who refrain or who cease to consider themselves so bound. The DECLARATION, with its signature by the Associates, is a wide departure from anything that exists as an organization. *

We are not concerned in "seeing things," but in awakening the Higher Consciousness—for we know that Theosophy gives the knowledge of the principles that should guide its students in their public and private work. We should also be able to find explicit directions—explicit in the sense that Theosophy points the way clearly how best to serve our fellows. So, it is good work to search out and make available to all, those necessary quotations from their writings which carry the *intent* of the Teachers. If such could not be found, one might have grave doubts as to the course to be pursued. If we are able thus to throw a clearer light upon the intent, our work will be good for both the learners and the learned.

The basis of successful work is Unity: this is the constant cry of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. To be able to afford a basis for Unity to individuals or organizations, without demanding any relinquishment of affiliation or belief, is no small thing. Paraphrasing a saying of the Master, we might say, "All Theosophy is before you; take what you can."

The part we play, major or minor, does not concern us at all. Our *work* is to call attention to the true basis for Union among Theosophists—

* "U.L.T." is the abbreviation of United Lodge of Theosophists, a voluntary association of Theosophical students.

and at the same time to set the example. People need, whether new students or old, to grasp the message of Theosophy for itself—not because of belief in any person or organization. If students succeed in grasping and applying the Philosophy, they will have true clairvoyance as to men, things and methods, and their gratefulness will include all that contributed to their opportunity; this gratitude will find expression in their doing the same for others.

So, the effort should be to get those interested to participate, to associate themselves with the Work and share in the responsibility—not by proselyting or urging, but by keeping the idea before them in various ways. As with anything else, every method has to be tried, but without making the line too hard-and-fast. The main work is to convey ideas. Our purpose is to draw attention to the Teachers and the Teaching, not to any others; hence it is conservation, safety, to maintain the impersonality of “U.L.T.” Its aim, scope and purpose are shown in the Declaration, and besides, attention is called to the great underlying Movement which compels such alterations from time to time; so, as the declared policy is followed out and the Teaching is studied, the practical amplification will come of itself. Until each one clarifies his own perceptions, he would not know gold of Ophir from base metal. Let “U.L.T.” flourish on its moral worth alone.

The work we have to do, the knowledge we have to give out, depends on no other names than those of the true Teachers, H.P.B. and W.Q.J and to the Masters whom They served. Nothing else will restore the Movement. Theosophy does not emanate from any society nor from any living persons. So far as the world and all Theosophists are concerned, Theosophy comes from H.P.B. and W.Q.J., or rather, through them. So, to avoid misconceptions we get back to the Message and the Messengers.

Our efforts may seem inadequate, but they are in the right direction, and “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” We will do what we can and all that we know how to do, enduring the evils of the present while attempting that which will work for greater good in the future, here a little and there a little, thus leading the minds

of Theosophists of every degree and in every society to as broad a conception of the Philosophy as possible. And all these efforts will be educational for us, too, for we will have to meet all kinds of minds from ignorance to arrogance, and so speak as to leave an impress that will stick. H.P.B. once wrote: *“If anyone holds to Buddha’s philosophy, let him say and do as Buddha said and did; if a man calls himself a Christian, let him follow the*

commandments of Christ—not the interpretations of his many dissenting priests and sects.” The moral is—If anyone desires to be a Theosophist, let him study Theosophy as it was given by those who enunciated it. For one to accept as true what *any* teacher chooses to tell him, without any means given him by which to verify the statements made, or without verifying for himself the facts alleged—is simply to believe on blind faith, as do so many others.

Our own difficult task is to avoid all semblance of authority of any kind, while being at the same time sure of our ground and not afraid to say so. We have to give every one an opportunity to see for himself that what we have to say is well founded. What we have to give are the salient points, clear and definite, so that they cannot be passed over by the reader but stand as facts verifiable by anyone who cares to do so. We have undertaken a high mission and a heavy task—not because we think ourselves so eminently fit, but because we see the need.

Mere attendance at meetings is not enough to make us feel our identity with the work. Attendance is but the preliminary to a further step; this shows itself when those who attend begin to ask how they may obtain further understanding. As they participate, they develop, of course—but they must not be allowed to forget the object of the help afforded them, nor that such help is but a means and a way. The object of Theosophical study and work is *not* individual development, but that each and all should become true helpers of Humanity. Some will catch the feeling.

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The tendency to say more than is useful to the newcomers is a common one in the beginning, but is gradually overcome when it is seen to minimize inquiry. We should push nothing, while responding to everything. We would not use force if we could, because each mind has to be free to choose; otherwise there would be no true progress. And I think this is a good attitude to be taken in the matter of questions concerning theosophical claims and exponents. These various stripes must have their place in the great economy of consciousness—they must have, or people would not be attracted by them, would not seize and hold on to them. When the particular “stripe” does not bring the devotee the expected result in knowledge, then a further search is indicated to the mind so caught. Every person really waked up by such claims or exponents will touch us sooner or later, if we hold to the straight line. The fewer the words an idea can be expressed in, the better. Our effort is to disseminate among Theosophists the idea of *unity regardless of organization*. Let each go his own way, and with best intention, giving credit to others for the same: in this way *we* set up no hindrances, no matter what others may do. We sympathize with *all* efforts to spread broadcast the teachings of Theosophy pure

and simple, without expressing preference for any organization or individual so engaged—recognizing that while methods differ, the Cause of one is the Cause of all. We all need to cultivate that charity which sympathizes with every effort to spread Theosophy, even if the methods and other things do not appeal to us: any effort is better than no effort at all.

We point to the Message, the Messengers, and Their enunciation of the Work. It should be our policy to state at each meeting what our purposes are—namely, to disseminate the fundamental principles of Theosophy and to answer questions on the subject-matter provided.

The Authority which we recognize is not what men term authority, which comes from outside and which demands obedience, but an *internal recognition of the value* of that which flows through any given point, focus, or individual. This is the authority of one's Self-discrimination,

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intuition, the highest intellection. If we follow what we recognize in that way, and still find it good, we naturally keep our faces in that direction. This means no slavish following of any person.

H.P.B. wrote, and showed herself a true Teacher when she said, "Do not follow me nor my path; follow the Path I show, the Masters who are behind." The wisdom of this advice is seen in observing the course of those who judged of the teaching by what they could see of the teacher. They judged her by *their* standards, not by her adhesion to the Theosophy she taught. We point always that the most and the best anyone can do is to do as Judge did—follow the lines laid down by H.P.B., regardless of any others. The strength shown by any worker is not that of the personality, which has none, of itself; it lies in the words, the ideas, the conviction of truth held by the inner man.

We are striving for Unity first, and as far as possible leave out points that may antagonize. Theosophy itself, pure and simple, is the great "unifier"; more we can encourage others to study and apply *Theosophy*, the more will they see for themselves the parts played by the various persons and personages in the movement. Our work is to inform, not to proselyte.

When questions are asked about persons in the Movement, and when occasion compels it, plain statements of fact have to be made, but in *defense of Theosophy*, not in condemnation of any person. This is our key to a right attitude in all such cases presented

by theosophical history, made or in the making. It may be a hair line—but we have to find it, and while pointing out truth, whether in Theosophical philosophy or history, to avoid condemnation, even where names have to be mentioned. Where others have made mistakes and gone wrong, they become a vicarious atonement for those who might have done the same thing but for the lesson learned from the errors of others.

One has to know Truth in order to detect its counterfeits. So, we point to the Message and the Messengers as the Source upon which all should rely who desire to learn what pure Theosophy is and what it is not. What all need is intelligent devotion to Masters' cause. It

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is always personal divagations that throw students off the Philosophy. We have to go ahead, doing what seems right in ever varying circumstances, and that is where discrimination comes in. It is never what one would like to do in this or that condition—but what should be done. We have much to do to fit ourselves for what may be in store. Can we do it? We can try.

If the basic ideas are not taken in, nothing can be done. If we can do no more than to keep these ideas *alive* in the world and among Theosophists, we should be content; but we are not through, and while our life lasts we will keep on doing all we can to give others a sound basis, a better understanding of what the great Ideas of Theosophy mean. Each of us must find his own expressions of the same great Truths.

This is an age of transition and our work is to hark back to first principles, promulgate and sustain them as best we can, so that they shall be ready for those who need them, drawing our inspiration from the Message and the Messengers.

What we need to be on our guard against in working theosophically is not our mistakes—but our *avoidable* mistakes. It is a mistake to allow the impression to grow in anyone's mind that *he* is of importance to Theosophy. Theosophy was restored to the world for the sake of those who are looking for light, not for those who are satisfied with things as they are and life as they find it. So, to try to interest special persons is not worth the effort expended. The very effort made prevents by arousing either opposition or erroneous notions. To let as many as possible know about Theosophy, but to seek out no one in particular, is the wiser course. The Karma of many is such as to leave no mental or physical doors open directly, yet even they may be reached indirectly through the efforts of others in affinity with them, who may take hold and find the way. What we should do

is rather to convey the information that the opportunity to understand and apply Theosophy comes under

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Karma to the very few, not because it is withheld from anyone, but because their prevailing tendencies are not of a nature to leave the mind open to the consideration of new truths, or to enable them to take advantage of the ways and means afforded. This comes from neglect or misuse of opportunities in former lives, in many cases. Especially is this true in this age when so much of the ancient Wisdom is once more made available to all who *will*. All get this chance, some more favorably than others. It is the height of unwisdom to neglect the opportunity again, most especially in those cases where it is brought home to them without effort. In our daily lives we mingle with people as they are. This enables us to show human sympathy with their life, to understand their conditions, without getting involved in either, while in indefinable ways giving the impression of the serious side of life and the necessity of real knowledge as to its meaning.

It is both wise and necessary to have a good comprehension of ways and means, of the processes of dealing with others' minds, not merely for the sake of doing or being "good," but that they and we may learn the rules of Soul-warfare, the duties, individual and collective, of the incarnated Ego, the "warrior." We are Karma, for we are the cause of *all* we do. Our trouble is that we do not realize the extent to which the causes go which we set in motion, either for good or evil. Hence the necessity for knowing our pedigree, spiritual, intellectual, and physical. Our heredity is our own, the present effects of causes set going by us in the long past.

Although all that we can say is but a restatement, there is a different light cast sometimes by a word or an application, which will be helpful and useful to some. The two things that hinder effectiveness are our own failure to give as good an impression as might be, and the failure of the listener to appreciate the meaning of what is said. Most minds cannot look beyond the person, with his faults and limitations, beyond the giver to the gift itself and all that it implies, and so, expect too much of the personality in that it does not fully embody what is handed on.

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If we stand true and steadfast as to our aim, purpose and teaching, we will afford such aid and guidance as is in our power to all who may inquire, and all necessary arrangements will shape themselves. We have but to keep continually in mind and heart

the *original lines* laid by H.P.B. and W.Q.J., namely UNITY first, as a focus for spiritual growth and mutual strength; STUDY, that a knowledge of the Movement, its purpose, its Teachers and its Message, may be had; Work, upon ourselves in the light of that study, and for others first, last, and all the time.

All that any of us can give is Theosophy. We did not invent it. It was given to us; we stand in line and pass it along, as people used to do at fires in passing the buckets of water. People are grateful to the one who passes the “water of life” along to them, but the “passer” knows where gratitude belongs, and says: “Don’t thank me; thank Theosophy—as I do. It enables me to help others; it will also enable you.” Thus, he helps them and helps himself to get rid of the personal idea. The fight against the “personal idea” is a long one and a strong one. It has to be guarded against that it does not take to itself what *it* has no claim to.

The Messengers have left all that is necessary—for us and for others—in the way of direction; it is for us and for them to apply the right things at the right times and in the right way. All those who will consider philosophy, logic and facts on their merits—all those who are or who may become to any extent open-minded, will make some investigation, will gain a better outlook to that degree, a better appreciation of the need for Unity on a *philosophical* basis. What Theosophy is engaged in, through those who believe in it, without any mental reservations whatsoever, is a battle for *recognition*. Theosophy serves to explain the hidden side, the real and inner meaning of all things, for it is a friend to understanding, an aid to knowledge. By it a man may come to know himself through and through. It is because of misunderstanding of the real Self that we have all these religions, sects, parties, dogmas, with all their vested interests and sustainers. It is the Karma of the race that meets us, so we will not cry out nor dodge it when it confronts us. What we might otherwise

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think is the worst, is the best thing that could come, if we meet it in the right spirit, clearing up our Karma as we go along, making ourselves better instruments.

It is by dwelling on our inherent perfectibility that we get rid of our imperfections. The last thing to doubt is the inherent perfectibility of all men. Here is an interesting statement by H.P.B.:

Every Ego has the Karma of past Manvantaras behind him. The Ego starts with Divine Consciousness—no past, no future, no separation. It is long before realizing that it is itself. Only after many births does it begin to discern by this collectivity of experience

that it is individual. At the end of its cycle of reincarnation it is still the same Divine Consciousness, but it has now become individualized Self-Consciousness.

Without this sense of inherent perfection, there would be nothing worth living for: a few years of “pleasure and pain,” and then it is all gone—and what has been gained? Do what we will, we cannot escape Life, for we *are* Life—all the time; most of us realize but a portion of its possibilities. Sometime we will learn what Life really means. We are working to that end, for others as well as ourselves—mostly now for those others “who know still less than we,” but we also are learning all the time. Is it not worth all that it costs? Men make greater sacrifices than we are called upon to make, and for infinitely less—a few years of questionable happiness, and then oblivion as far as they know or can see. That we can see even a little of the purpose of life, is much; to feel it, is greater still; to realize it, is to live. It is a School of Life, and everything that comes to us at any time contains in it the thing we need, whether it seems hard, troublesome or pleasant.

Theosophists must point out error by comparison with Theosophy. Methods must vary with time, place and conditions. We have to learn that the way to present truth is by examining various beliefs in its light. The ideas we have to present implies a full sense of freedom on the part of the one who listens, as well as on the part

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of the speaker. In these days of proselyting and propaganda for all sorts of ‘isms there is the more need for tolerance if we are to find those chinks in the mind of others through which questions may possibly be aroused. We can set the example of examining anything on its merits and then presenting in contrast the Theosophical view, which accords with nature as a whole. The way to know the truth is to get back to what the Teachers themselves gave, both in philosophy and in right work. Masters never cease working, and it is always possible for even the humblest Theosophist who is clear-eyed and humanity-loving to aid Their endeavor. We need to bring again and again to the attention of all discouraged or bewildered Theosophists what H.P.B. wrote to Judge in 1888:

“Night before last I was shown a bird’s-eye view of the Theosophical Societies. I saw a few earnest, reliable Theosophists in a death-struggle with the world in general, and with other—nominal but ambitious—Theosophists. The former are greater in number than you may think, and they *prevailed*, as you in *America will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master’s programme and true to yourselves.”

And again: “For it is only when the Nucleus is formed that the accumulations *can begin* that will end in future years, *however far*, in the formation of that body *which we have*

in view." I do not think that They used words purposelessly; it is for us and for all others who would serve Them, to apply, apply, apply Their teachings. There is no time limit to effort.

Study and preparation on the part of beginners will alone make them efficient as propagandists. In endeavoring to aid them, it is essential to encourage their own initiative as much as possible, suggesting and adjusting when and where necessary.

In the beginning, the middle, and the end, we should hold to the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* in all our work—for upon these the whole philosophy hinges, and unless well grounded in them, no real progress can be had. The first thing to make clear in every exposition of Theosophy is the *impossibility* of

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the ordinary conception of a personal or separate God, and the importance of realizing the SELF as all, in all. Then, the Law of Periodicity, Cycles or Karma, in all its applications as "the world's eternal ways." This shows Reincarnation by analogy, as also the successive re-embodiments of solar systems, planets, and every form of matter. This leads naturally to the consideration of "the Universal Over-Soul," the collective intelligence in any solar system, as well as in all of them—for all are connected, "down to the minutest conceivable atom," and what affects one affects all—Egos small and great as well as embryonic ones. This means Unity throughout all, interaction among all, individual responsibility.

It will be well at every study class to state what the purpose of the meeting is; to have volunteers state in their own words their understanding of the Three Fundamentals. Questions should be freely invited and asked, the object being that students, even beginners, should formulate for themselves. Only so can they make their understanding good, and get themselves in the position where they can best help others even as they have been helped. In the class in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, the Three Fundamentals are the background of the whole work. Chapter by chapter, in question and answer, the applications can be brought out and the consistency of the entire philosophy made clear. Individual students who want to learn should both ask and answer questions in terms of the philosophy itself. There will be difficulty in getting many to see the importance of this continual reiteration, but it is essential to all true progress.

The right way of looking at things is shown in Theosophy. Each has to learn, to know, and to control his own nature, if he is to acquire discrimination—the ability to help others. Each has to take the philosophy and *apply* it, in the face of all mistakes and acts which,

while they make the task more difficult, have been the means of arousing the very discrimination needed. Our mistakes can be turned to good account. We will take time to think what we shall say and

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how we shall say it. One gets over changeableness and indecision as he takes time to think things out fully before acting or making promises. He will then study to do whatever he says he will do. This carefulness will increase true self-reliance and the reliance that others will place in him. Only as full confidence is gained can men be helped in themselves and with each other. The Western mind is apt to look upon mere literary form and fine phrases as the standard of judgment. People in general do not get the *meaning* of what is written, in the same way that they do not extract the *value* from their experiences. They make surface deductions and applications only. So, they have little ability to apply the philosophy to daily life, nor can they see its practical value. They have to be helped to assimilate the fundamental principles if they are to realize right valuations and applications. Each has to eradicate his own faults in these as in other directions—not the faults of others. Until students set to work seriously on these lines, they cannot find surety nor happiness. Theosophy and its application go together, if there is to be real progress. It is not for us to say, “Do this,” or “Don’t do that.” It is for us to put the case, Theosophy and its individual application, and leave each student, each inquirer, to make his own decisions. People get into tight places right along by following “advices,” instead of exercising their own discrimination, and then invariably blame the “advisor” when matters do not go according to their expectations. “Amongst thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection.” So, among the many who may be interested in Theosophy—the philosophy of the perfectibility of Man—here and there will be one who may wake up. Therein lies the hope. And even those who are interested enough merely to listen or to read with attention, will get something in the way of a trend that may

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some day develop. If we keep trying in all proper ways and means open to us, something will come from such mutual endeavors. The fundamental statements of the Teachers are axioms to be applied. At the same time, they are woven in with such reasoning as may affect the ordinary way of thinking. Science, Psychology, and all efforts that are based on them, fail—and for no other reason than that they do not assume or admit that full and true knowledge exists. If Western Science and Psychology would go on with their painstaking efforts in the light of Theosophy, the spiritual and intellectual darkness of the world would soon be overcome and a civilization brought into being that would best express a true physical life. What hinders? Intellectual pride, together with the cramping

effects of false religious conceptions. If the idea is held that there is but one life on earth, then all the learning of the man and of the age is limited to a small and narrow range. But if one grasps the idea of successive lives on earth—all under Karma—then, the learning takes on a wider sweep, leading the man to the conception that all powers of every kind proceed from the Supreme, the Self of all creatures; that he himself is in reality a spiritual being, and must think and act as such. We may not be able to apply, as fully as we and others might desire, all the axioms and reasoning of the philosophy; but what of that? We can apply what is possible and all that is possible to us, and in that application greater understanding and facility arise. Each one has to find *his* way. Words cannot give it, yet there *is* a way for each. Most of the trouble lies in trying to see, trying to hear, trying to “think” it all out, instead of applying what we *do* see. All ability comes very gradually, imperceptibly—felt, grasped, realized, rather than perceived in the ordinary sense. . . . There is not enough acquaintance with the philosophy itself for many students to have confidence

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enough to take hold and carry on the work. They ought to have learned that no one is Theosophy and the best are but transmitters; that they too, having received, should get busy doing as much by others, becoming transmitters in their turn.

We are dealing with *minds*, not persons. The Soul, being conformed to the mind, reacts upon the whole nature. If, as persons, we could all look at the world of ideas in that way, we would learn more, gain more discrimination, and be more useful to others, so meriting Their guiding influence. It is *Karma*, all of it; students should realize that and benefit by the knowledge. The right start is everything. If this is gained and held, then all that each one does carries him and others in the right direction. Either Theosophy pure and undefiled is the most real thing in the world, or we are all wasting our time and effort. If we are able to conceive its reality in all seriousness, we should then never cease trying to understand and apply what has been recorded by Masters’ Messenger for our guidance and instruction. What is the distinction between Theosophy and anything else? In *Fundamental Principles*, I should say. Nothing else affords an all-inclusive view of existence. All kinds of sincere efforts help, all kinds of systems contain some truth, but they all fall short, because they all exclude or ignore some part of nature. Theosophists of every degree should realize that under Karma much is required of those to whom much has been given in opportunity and knowledge. We can only use our opportunities and knowledge to the best possible advantage and continue to do so, if we would not ourselves fall short of the requirement of “the Law of Laws—Compassion absolute.” What has been done has been of real and lasting advantage to many; there are others yet unborn, yet to come. This is the time when one wishes to be like Brahma with “eyes,

heads, mouths and ears in every direction." Read "The Tidal Wave" in *Lucifer* (Vol. V, page 173) if you would learn how H.P.B. felt— and feels. The real point of issue is *the divine nature in man*. The real basis of work is to impress this on the minds of those who come.

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In Theosophy we have this basis. A right philosophy is desperately needed by the world. Without this, strength and special faculties are useless because they are misapplied. Theosophy is not merely words. It is Life, and this includes all things in life and all the planes of living. To have Brotherhood among the many, it is first necessary to realize brotherhood among the few, and the basis of brotherhood is the divinity inherent in all men.

All true impressions come from *within*—from the highest Principle in us, Atma, or the Divinity which is one and the same in all. If there is nothing in the brain but impressions from the lower principles of our being, nothing to connect the Thinker with higher planes, he can but waver between these lower states. If thought is to rise further, it must be *thought without a brain*. Nature works by orderly processes to which we give the name of law. In the individual it is called the Will. By an act of the will all ordinary mental processes may be stopped; then the habitual center of mental action may be transcended and the ascent to the next plane made, without losing the power to perceive on this. In all such attempts we must keep the Fundamentals in view—in *mind*. The Spirit in man, the Perceiver, is "untouched by troubles, works, fruits of works, or desires." It seems to me that the clearest comprehension, if not understanding, of all this comes from dwelling on the idea of the Perceiver as looking into one or another of his "sheaths" and finding there the record of the actions in any or all of them.

Everything depends on what one has in mind—his *fundamental* conceptions of Deity, Nature, and Man, when considering or attempting to practice "concentration." The general idea on this as on other subjects and objects is purely personal. There is no self-examination of motives, no altruism, no effort to carry out in daily life the assumed object of fitting one's self to be the better able to help and teach others, no observation of the evil effects of rushing in for "psychic

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development." H.P.B. says, "One has to have an *unshakable* faith in the Deity within, an unlimited belief in his own power to learn; otherwise he is bound to fall into delusion and irresponsible medium-ship." Here is the signpost of warning against all attempts to

develop psychically before one has learned to master and guide the lower, personal self. What is indispensable is right philosophy and its application in daily life. By the wrong attitude in this and other respects, many well-meaning theosophists fail, and harm themselves and others. The meaning is plain. Leave psychism alone; work from the spiritual side upon the lower nature—visible and invisible, psychic and physical—first by analysis and comprehension of the principles of our being as Theosophy teaches, then by the guidance of knowledge as it arises within oneself. We pass from plane to plane daily, but relate everything to the brain circle of necessity, and thus lose the real meanings. Dwelling on the Fundamentals and the endeavor to help others is the true concentration. Mr. Judge wrote: “Thus the Will is freed from the domination of desire and at last subdues the mind itself.”

If Theosophy is taken to be something of an abstraction, or a simple point of beginning from which a system is to be developed by individual research, the whole idea of Masters as the custodians of the accumulated wisdom of the ages and Their Message to the world of men, has to be abandoned. Every student worthy of the name knows that H. P. Blavatsky gave a body of knowledge to the world; that She named what She gave “Theosophy” and that She explicitly declared it to be from the Masters of Wisdom.

In justice to the Message, to the Messenger who brought it and to the ideal of Masters, nothing should be named Theosophy but this Message. Whoever takes any other position violates the first laws of occultism by belittling both Message and Messenger, and cannot expect to benefit by them.

Those who accept the Message and belittle the Messenger, are equally unfortunate, for in belittling one, they belittle both. To these it should be said that it is folly to imagine that the Masters of Wisdom did not know enough to select a Messenger who would deliver

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Their Message correctly and in its entirety. The Masters’ wisdom being questioned, the whole edifice falls to the ground. There is but one safe course. Theosophy must be understood to be a gift to mankind by more progressed beings than ourselves. We must learn, and *apply*, the fundamental principles which underlie that grand philosophy, and understand the operation of law as disclosed therein. Then, and then only can we begin to make Theosophy a living power in our lives. We should preserve a willingness to give and receive instruction, but we should in either case be sure that such instruction is in exact accord with the principles and laws set forth in the Theosophic philosophy.

If each student did this, all would have one aim, one purpose, one teaching, and a sure basis for united effort. Such differences of individual opinion as might arise would be solved by a careful adjustment of these to the philosophy. Thus, all would be united; all preserve the utmost freedom of thought; all progress most rapidly by self-induced and self-devised efforts. No one, then, would make the fatal blunder of imagining that Theosophy is something which can be developed, but each would devote his thought and effort to growth along the lines that Theosophy indicates, so that he may become the better able to help and to teach others.

If there is such a knowledge as the Wisdom-Religion, it is the result of the observation and experience of the Masters of Wisdom, and as such stands for itself; it can neither be enlarged nor improved upon by its students. Furthermore, what was named "Theosophy" by Mme. Blavatsky is that same Wisdom-Religion so far as the latter has been promulgated by the Teacher. In regard to the latter statement H.P.B. herself has written:

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The Secret Doctrine (or Wisdom-Religion) is not a series of vague theories or treatises, but is all that can be given out in this century. It will be centuries before much more is given. A similar statement by W. Q. Judge is as follows: It (Theosophy) is not a belief or dogma formulated or invented by man, but is a knowledge of the laws which govern the evolution of the physical, astral, psychical and intellectual constituents of nature and of man. Theosophy is not a religion, but Religion itself in the truest sense; even the use of the term "religion" without any qualification is misleading, for Theosophy is not "a belief" as religions are generally, but rather Religious Science, Scientific Religion, and an all-inclusive philosophy.

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