



The Mystery of Suffering

*Suffering, the teacher, the awakener of
consciousness.* H.P.B.

“Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. Each cell in the living body must sacrifice itself to the perfection of the whole; when it is otherwise, disease and death enforce the lesson. Harmony is the law of life, discord its shadow; whence springs suffering, the teacher, the awakener of consciousness. Real Self-knowledge is the awakening to consciousness of the divine nature of man.” (*Lucifer* 1890)

Christina Rossetti's well-known lines:

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Does the journey take the whole long day?
From morn till night, my friend.”

are like an epitome of the life of those who are truly treading the path which leads to higher things. Whatever differences are to be found in the various presentations of the Esoteric Doctrine, as in every age it donned a fresh garment, different both in hue and texture to that which preceded; yet in everyone of them we find the fullest agreement upon one point — the road to spiritual development. One only inflexible rule has been ever binding upon the neophyte, as it is binding now — the **complete** subjugation of the lower nature by the higher. From the **Vedas** and **Upanishads** to **Light on the Path**, we find but one only way — hard, painful, troublesome, by which man can gain true spiritual insight. And how can it be otherwise since all religions and all philosophies are but the variants of the first teachings of the One

Wisdom, imparted to men at the beginning of the cycle by the Planetary Spirit?

The true Adept, the developed man, must, we are always told, **become** — he cannot be made. The process is therefore one of growth through evolution, and this must necessarily involve a certain amount of pain. The main cause of pain lies in our perpetually seeking the permanent in the impermanent, and not only seeking, but acting as if we had already found the unchangeable, in a world of which the one certain quality we can predicate is constant change, and always, just as we fancy we have taken a firm hold upon the permanent, it changes within our very grasp, and pain results.

Again, the idea of growth involves also the idea of disruption, the inner being must continually burst through its confining shell or encasement, and such a disruption must also be accompanied by pain, not physical but mental and intellectual. And this is how it is, in the course of our lives; the trouble that

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comes upon us is always just the one we feel to be the hardest that could possibly happen — it is always the one thing we feel we cannot possibly bear. If we look at it from a wider point of view, we shall see that we are trying to burst through our shell at its one vulnerable point; that our growth, to be real growth, and not the collective result of a series of excrescences, must progress evenly throughout, just as the body of a child grows, not first the head and then a hand, followed perhaps by a leg; but in all directions at once, regularly and imperceptibly. Man's tendency is to cultivate each part separately, neglecting the others in the meantime — every crushing pain is caused by the expansion of some neglected part, which expansion is rendered more difficult by the effects of the cultivation bestowed elsewhere.

Evil is often the result of over-anxiety, and men are always trying to do too much, they are not content to leave well enough alone, to do always just what the occasion demands and no more, they exaggerate every action and so produce karma to be worked out in a future birth. One of the subtlest forms of this evil is the hope and desire of reward. Many there are who, albeit often unconsciously, are yet spoiling all their efforts by entertaining this idea of reward, and allowing it to become an active factor in their lives and so leaving the door open to anxiety, doubt, fear, despondency-failure.

The Theosophical Society was founded to teach no new and easy paths to the acquisition of “powers;” and its only mission is to re-ignite the torch of truth, so long extinguished for all but the very few, and to keep that truth alive by the formation of a fraternal union of mankind, the only soil in which the good seed can grow. The Society can only

bring about such result by the active co-operation of every one of its members, and we would earnestly appeal to each of them to consider carefully what possibilities of work are within his power, and then to earnestly set about doing them. Right thought is a good thing, but thought alone does not count for much unless it is translated into action. There is not a single member in the Society who is not able to do **something** to aid the cause of truth and universal brotherhood; it only depends on his own will, to make that **something** an accomplished fact. [Taken from, “Spiritual Progress,” by H. P. Blavatsky]

No Entity, whether angelic or human, can reach the state of Nirvana, or of absolute purity, except through aeons of suffering and the knowledge of EVIL as well as of good, as otherwise the latter remains incomprehensible.

Between man and the animal — whose Monads (or Jivas) are fundamentally identical — there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a **portion of the essence** — and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the very essence — of a higher Being: one from a higher and divine plane? Can man — a god in the animal form — be the product of Material Nature by evolution alone, even as is the animal, which differs from man in external shape, but by no means in the materials of its physical fabric, and is informed by the same, though undeveloped, Monad — seeing that the intellectual potentialities of the two differ as the Sun does from the Glow-worm? And what is it that creates such difference, unless man is an animal **plus a living god** within his physical shell? Let us pause and ask ourselves seriously the question, regardless of the vagaries and sophisms of both the materialistic and the

psychological modern sciences. ... The too puritan idealist is at liberty to spiritualize the tenet, whereas the modern psychologist would simply try to spirit away our “fallen,” yet still divine human Soul in its connection with **Buddhi**. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 81)

Woe to those who live without suffering. Stagnation and death is the future of all that vegetates without a change. And how can there be any change for the better without proportionate suffering during the preceding stage? Is it not those only who have learnt the deceptive value of earthly hopes and the illusive allurements of external nature who are destined to solve the great problems of life, pain, and death? (*Ibid.*, II, 475)

As mankind multiplies, and with it suffering — which is the natural result of an increasing number of units that generate it — sorrow and pain are intensified. We live in an atmosphere of gloom and despair, but this is because our eyes are downcast and rivetted to the earth, with all its physical and grossly material manifestations. If, instead of that, man proceeding on his life-journey looked — not heavenward, which is but a figure of speech — but **within himself** and centered his point of observation on the **inner** man, he would soon escape from the coils of the great serpent of illusion. From the cradle to the grave, his life would then become supportable and worth living, even in its worst phases. ...

Eastern wisdom teaches that spirit has to pass through the ordeal of incarnation and life, and be baptized with matter before it can reach experience and knowledge. After which only it receives the baptism of soul, or self-

consciousness, and may return to its original condition of a god, **plus** experience, ending with omniscience. In other words, it can return to the original state of the homogeneity of primordial essence only through the addition of the fruitage of Karma, which alone is able to create an **absolute** conscious deity, removed but one degree from the absolute **ALL**. (Taken from “The Origin of Evil,” by H. P. Blavatsky)

Imagination is a potent help in every event of our lives. Imagination acts on Faith and both are the draftsmen who prepare the sketches for Will to engrave, more or less deeply, on the rocks or obstacles and opposition with which the path of life is strewn. ... Half, if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. **Destroy the latter and give another bent to the former**, and nature will do the rest. (H.P. Blavatsky)

Giving another bent to our imagination is a recognition that suffering is basically a mental problem. Patanjali, gives us a method of bending our imagination into the groove of our ideals and away from the habits of egotism and vice we bring with us from former incarnations:

In order to exclude from the mind questionable things, the mental calling up of those things that are opposite is efficacious for their removal. Questionable things, whether done, caused to be done, or approved of; whether resulting from covetousness, anger, or delusion; whether slight, or of intermediate character, or beyond measure, are productive of very many fruits in the shape of pain and ignorance; hence, the “calling up of those things that are opposite” is in every way advisable. (*Yoga Aphorisms*, pp. 29-30)

Since most of us have fairly intense evil grooves of imagination brought with us into incarnation, suffering becomes the lot of the personal man. That to which we gave our attention during our spare-time, made the diseases under which we now suffer. Attention is the key to health and contentment. Arthur Morgan makes this obvious in the last chapter of his book, *The Long Road*. Madame Blavatsky states the philosophical rationale of the problem in this way:

How is it that our eyes see a thousand things every hour and still impress our “consciousness” with only a few of these things? How is it that every hour a thousand thoughts pass through our lower mind, while only a few of them we say are “conscious”? What does this “consciousness” mean? This “consciousness” is simply our **emotional nature**, our **fourth principle**.

Suppose I have now a certain set of emotions, a certain portion of my fourth principle is more active than the remaining portion. If at that time my eyes mechanically look at certain things, and if these things do not contain at that time the same set of emotions that are agitating me — that is, if those things that my eyes are set upon are not animated or agitated powerfully by elementals or forces or gods corresponding to my present emotions—then I am said to be not impressed by those things thus seen. I say I am not conscious of them, I am not interested in them, I paid no attention to them. But if those things, on the other hand, be agitated more or less powerfully by some or all of the same emotions, then I more or less become conscious or impressed by what the eyes saw. You see a tree, and yet you say you did not take notice of many things about it. I say I saw you, but did not observe something in or about you. This is the secret of the matter. This is the law of attraction.

Similarly a number of thoughts **pass now** through my lower mind. If those thoughts have not in them the same emotions that agitate at present in my **fourth principle**, then I am said not to have cognized these thoughts. How remarkable that the **fourth principle**,

which is just the center of all our nature, the very middle of all our seven principles, three above and three below, should be the keynote to all attractions, pleasures and pain. (H. P. Blavatsky)

The only real, significant suffering that occurs in human life stems from our refusal to fill our dreams and deeds with the children of our ideals rather than those of our past imperfections. In the *DREAM* Section of Transactions we find the duality of Manas illustrated like this:

Question: But the two, the higher and the lower, Manas are one, are they not?

Answer: They are, and yet they are not — and that is the great mystery. The Higher Manas or **Ego** is essentially divine, and therefore pure; no stain can pollute it, as no punishment can reach it, per se, the more so since it is innocent of, and takes no part in, the deliberate transactions of its Lower Ego. Yet by the very fact that, though dual and during life the Higher is distinct from the lower, “the Father and Son” **are one**, and because that in reuniting with the parent Ego, the Lower Soul fastens upon and impresses upon it all its bad as well as good actions — both have to suffer, the Higher Ego, though innocent and without blemish, has to **bear the punishment of the misdeeds committed by the lower Self together with it in their future incarnation**. The whole doctrine of atonement is built upon this old esoteric tenet; for the Higher EGO is the antitype of that which is on this earth the type, namely, the personality. ... Christ-**Kshetrajna**, the “God-Man,” the First-born, [are all names for ourselves as an incarnating god]. *The Secret Doctrine* shows that the Manasa-Putras or incarnating **Egos** have taken upon themselves voluntarily and knowingly, the burden of all the future sins of their personalities. Thence it is easy to see it is neither Mr. A. nor Mr. B., nor any of the personalities that periodically clothe the Self-Sacrificing Ego, which are the real Sufferers, but verily the innocent Christos within us. Hence the mystic Hindus say that Eternal Self, or the Ego (the one in three and three in one), is the “charioteer” or driver; the personalities are the

temporary and evanescent passengers; while the horses are the animal passions of man. It is, then, true to say that when we remain deaf to the Voice of our Conscience, we crucify the Christos within us.

That which we call *will* has its seat in the higher EGO, and the latter, when it is rid of its sin-laden personality, is divine and pure. The Self is the real Ego, and it lives and acts, though on a different plane. The external life is a "dream" to this Ego, while the inner life, or the life on what we call the dream plane, is the real life for it. The physical animal man is as little responsible as a dog or a mouse. For the bodily form all is over with the death of the body. But the real SELF, that which emanated its own shadow, or the lower thinking personality, that enacted and pulled the wires during the life of the physical automaton, will have to suffer conjointly with its factotum and alter ego in its next incarnation.

"The unassailable basis for union among Theosophists is **SIMILARITY OF AIM, PURPOSE, AND TEACHING**. The acceptance of this principle removes barriers. A beginning must be made by those **whose minds have become plastic by the buffetings of experience.**"

Effort in the army of Conscience makes our life pliable to the needs of the hour.

Real love is the end of "internal suffering" regardless of the drama unfolding in one's outer life:

It is a divine, eternal, and infinite power, a light which reflects itself in every object while it seeks not the object, but merely its own reflection therein. It is an indestructible fire and the brighter it burns, the stronger will be the light and the clearer will its own image appear. Love falls in love with nothing but its own self, it is free from all other attractions. A love which becomes attached to objects of sense, ceases to be free, ceases to be love, and becomes mere desire. Pure and eternal love asks for nothing, but gives freely to all who are

willing to receive. Earthly love is attracted to persons and things, but Divine spiritual love seeks only that which is divine in everything, and this can be nothing else but love, for love is the supreme power of all. It hold together the worlds in space, it clothes the earth in bright and beautiful colors, it guides the instincts of animals and links together the hearts of human beings. Acting upon the lower planes of existence it causes terrestrial things to cling to each other with fond embrace; but love on the spiritual plane is free. Spiritual love is a goddess, who continually sacrifices herself for herself and who accepts no other sacrifice but her own self, giving for whatever she may receive, herself in return. Therefore the *Bhagavad-Gita* says: "Nourish ye the gods by this and let the gods nourish you. Thus nourishing each other ye shall obtain the highest good" (Cap. iii., ii.); and the Bible says: "To him who has still more shall be given, and from him who has not, even what he has shall be taken away" (Luke xix., 26).

Love is an universal power and therefore immortal, it can never die. We cannot believe that even the smallest particle of love ever died, only the instruments through which it becomes manifest change their form; nor will it ever be born, for it exists from eternity, only the bodies into which it shines are born and die and are born again. A Love which is not manifest is non-existent for us, to come into existence means to become manifest. How then could we possibly imagine a human being possessed of a love which never becomes manifest; how can we possibly conceive of a light which never shines and of a fire which does not give any heat?

True "prayer," **i.e.**, the elevation and aspiration of the soul "in spirit and in truth" (John xiv., 14), is useful, not because it will persuade the light to come nearer to us, but because it will assist us to open our eyes for the purpose of seeing *the light that was already there*. Let those who desire to come into contact with the Adepts enter their sphere by following their doctrines; seeking for love, but not for an object of love, and when they have found the former, they will find a superabundance of the latter throughout the whole extent of the unlimited universe; they will find it in everything that exists, for love is the foundation of

all existence and without love nothing can possibly continue to exist.

Love — divine love — is the source of life, of light, and happiness. It is the creative principle in the Macrocosm and in the Microcosm of man. It is **Venus**, the mother of all the gods, because from her alone originates **Will** and **imagination** and all the other powers by which the universe was evolved. It is the germ of divinity which exists in the heart of man, and which may develop into a life-giving sun, illuminating the mind and sending its rays to the center of the universe; for it originates from that center and to that center it will ultimately return. It is a divine messenger, who carries Light from Heaven down to the Earth and returns again to Heaven loaded with sacrificial gifts.

It is worshipped by all, some adore it in one form and some in another, but many perceive only the form and do not perceive the divine spirit. Nevertheless the spirit alone is real, the form is an illusion. Love can exist without form, but no form can exist without love. It is pure Spirit, but if its light is reflected in matter, it creates desire and desire is the producer of forms. Thus the visible world of perishable things is created. “But above this visible nature there exists another, unseen and eternal, which, when all created things perish, does not perish” (*Bh. G.* viii. 20), and “from which they who attain to it never return.” This is the supreme abode of Love without any object, unmanifested and imperishable, for there no object exists. There love is united to love, enjoying supreme and eternal happiness within her own self and that peace, of which the mortal mind, captivated by the illusion of form, cannot conceive. Non-existent for us, and yet existing in that Supreme Be-ness, in which all things dwell, by which the universe has been spread out, and which may be attained to by an exclusive devotion.”

— Emanuel

With memory of universality all dread vanishes during the dangers and trials of life. — H.P.B.

DUTY, ATTITUDE, and HABIT

That law which shuns learning, teaching wisdom may reveal a “tale of woe,” but it also reveals that the mind comes from the attitude we have toward creativity, for mind is a constant creator and we often end by creating ourself in the image of our enticements — those things that “bewitch our senses and blind the mind.” If our attitude had “wings” the mind could soar beyond the mire of name and form. It could teach us how to stand the uncertainties of constant change. Aspiration is innate to us, and can eat away the chains of habit if we but turn our attention that way:

“When, moved by the law of Evolution, The Lords of Wisdom infused into him the spark of consciousness, the first feeling it awoke to life and activity was a sense of solidarity, of one-ness with his spiritual creators... DEVOTION arose out of that feeling, and became the first and foremost motor in his nature... This feeling of irrepressible, instinctive aspiration in primitive man is beautifully, and one may say intuitionally, described by Carlyle. “The great antique heart,” he exclaims, “how like a child's in its simplicity, like a man's in its earnest solemnity and depth! Heaven lies over him wheresoever he goes or stands on the earth; making all the earth a mystic temple to him, the earth's business all a kind of worship... A great law of duty, high as these two infinitudes (heaven and hell), dwarfing all else, annihilating all else - it was a reality, and it is one: the garment only of it is dead; the essence of it lives through all times and all eternity!” (SD 1, 210-11)

Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self: but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men. (*Voice of the Silence*, p. 46)



THE COFFEE KLATCH

Coffee Maker: [mumbling to himself] It [*The Secret Doctrine*] admits a Logos or a collective “Creator” of the Universe; a Demiurgos— in the sense implied when one speaks of an “Architect” as the “Creator” of an edifice, whereas that Architect has never touched one stone of it, but, while furnishing the plan, left all the manual labour to the masons; in our case the plan was furnished by the Ideation of the Universe, and the constructive labour was left to the Hosts of intelligent Powers and Forces. But that Demiurgos is no personal deity, — i.e., an imperfect extra-cosmic god, — but only the aggregate of the Dhyan - Chohans and the other forces. (SD I 279)

Busy-body with cup: Stick to making that coffee! You quote the SD too much, besides we repeat this process in our own physical body, or at least it seems to me. Who knows? Our Lower Manas may be the Demiurgos for the liver? Or the toes?

Egg-head type: We should be quoting answers from the teachers not speculating, or inventing our own. The teachings have an answer for every question that could be asked:

Every Theosophist must understand when told that there are Manasic as well as Kamic organs in him, although the cells of his body answer to both physical and spiritual impulses.”

“Occultism teaches that the liver and the spleen-cells are the most subservient to the action of our “personal” mind, the heart being the organ par excellence through which the “Higher” Ego acts--through the Lower Self.”

“...no Physiologist or Biologist will accept these principles, nor can he make head or

tail of them. And this is why, perhaps, none of them understand to this day either the functions of the spleen, the physical vehicle of the Protean Double, or those of a certain organ on the right side of man, the seat of the above mentioned desires, nor yet does he know anything of the pineal gland, which he describes as a horny gland with a little sand in it, and which is the very key to the highest and divinest consciousness in man — his omniscient, spiritual and all embracing mind.”

“The vertebræ, fibers, ganglia, the cord, etc., of the spinal column; the heart, its four chambers, auricle and ventricle, valves and the rest; stomach, liver, lungs and spleen, everything has its special deific name, is believed to act consciously and to act under the potent will of the Yogi, whose head and heart are the seats of Brahmâ and the various parts of whose body are all the pleasure grounds of this or another deity!”

“No memory of a purely daily-life function, of a physical, egotistical, or of a lower mental nature — such as, e.g., eating and drinking, enjoying personal sensual pleasures, transacting business to the detriment of one's neighbor, etc., etc., has ought to do with the ‘Higher’ Mind or Ego.

Nor has it any direct dealings on this physical plane with either our brain or our heart--for these two are the organs of a power higher than the Personality — but only with our passional organs, such as the liver, the stomach, the spleen, etc.”

[The above can be found in HPB's articles, “Psychic and Noëtic Action,” “Kosmic Mind,” “Dialogue on the Mysteries of the Afterlife”]: —

Smart Aleck: Coffee Maker reads poorly, quotes with no finesse, and spills coffee on his customers!

I would go to the Transactions to solve the “collective aggregate problem.” There it is discussed in more detail on pages 99-100:

“Manu is, and contains the potentiality of all the thinking forms which will be developed on earth from this particular source. ... He is a unity which contains all the pluralities and their modifications. Every Manvantara has thus its own Manu and from this Manu the various Manus or rather all the *Manasa* of the Kalpas will proceed. As an analogy he may be compared to the white light which contains all the other rays, giving birth to them by passing through the prism of differentiation and evolution.

Is it possible to say that Manu is an individuality?

In the abstract sense certainly not, but it is possible to apply an analogy. Manu is the synthesis perhaps of the *Manasa*, and he is a single consciousness in the same sense that while all the different cells of which the human body is composed are different and varying consciousnesses there is still a unit of consciousness which is the man. But this unit, so to say, is not a single consciousness: it is a reflection of thousands and millions of consciousnesses which a man has absorbed.

But Manu is not really an individuality, it is the whole of mankind. They come from the Lunar Chain. They give birth to humanity, for, having become the first men, they give birth to others by evolving their shadows, their astral selves. But, as the moon receives its light from the Sun, so the descendants of the Lunar Pitris receive their higher mental light from the Sun or the ‘Son of the Sun.’ For all you know Vaivasvata Manu may be an *Avatar* or a personification of MAHAT, commissioned by the Universal Mind to lead and guide thinking Humanity onwards.”

Student buying coffee: Where does the plan come from?

Egghead type: Oh, give me a minute, I will think of something.

Furtive Bystander: While you’re thinking, my take on it is that the plan comes from KARMA.

Coffee Sipper: Jimminy Cricket! That’s like trading one “mask” for

“another”!! We’re dumber than we were when we came in! Paint your answer in another set of words.

Furtive Bystander: The word “plan” implies a need, or something not yet completed. It could be a “need” in the sense of a vision or opportunity, or perhaps a “need” in the sense of unfinished karmic debts when the last cycle closed.

What if the plan comes as a karmic blueprint from the last cycle — whether it be the lifetime of a human or that of a solar system?

Our Higher Ego carries both the karma and the plan for each descent into incarnation; so perhaps Mahat carries the “plan” for each descent into manifestation on a universal scale.

By analogy we could say that Mahat accepts or uses the karma of past descents in creating the PLAN for the new cycle.

Egghead Type: Applying this idea to our Higher Ego, the Transactions states:

The Higher Manas or EGO is essentially divine, and therefore pure; no stain can pollute it, as no punishment can reach it, PER SE, the more so since it is innocent of, and takes no part in, the deliberate transactions of its Lower Ego. Yet by the very fact that, though dual and during life the Higher is distinct from the Lower, “the Father and Son” ARE ONE, and because that in reuniting with the patent Ego, the Lower Soul fastens upon and impresses upon it, all its bad as well as good actions---both have to suffer, the Higher Ego, though innocent and without blemish, has to bear the punishment of the misdeeds committed by the *lower* Self together with it in their future incarnation. The whole doctrine of atonement is built upon this old esoteric tenet; for the Higher Ego, is

the antitype of that which is on this earth the type, namely the personality. It is, for those who understand it, the old Vedic story of Visvakarman.... [who sacrificed] HIMSELF TO HIMSELF, to save the worlds.

(pp. 67-8)

The sky and our aspiring ideations give each of us a *big blue umbrella*. No two are alike. It is truly "Unity in Diversity." This column sends echoes from that great expanse: the *three fundamentals*—

THE BIG BLUE UMBRELLA

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL

Critic: Would you agree that that which is public knowledge is, by default, exoteric?

Thinker: For the most part, yes. But even some "public" knowledge is esoteric because it has to be experienced to be understood. I can tell you all about a mystical experience, but if you never had one, you won't know what I am talking about. This is also true of emptiness which has to be experienced.

CRITIC: HPB never mentions emptiness or non-duality. Try reading a *Dzogchen* text and see the difference.

Thinker: Could it be that the idea of "emptiness" or "sunyata" (*i.e.*, form, by it's nature of continual infinitesimal change, is therefore empty of inherent existence), and the idea of non-duality (*i.e.* All that exists are parts of one existence) — are so obvious upon understanding of the Fundamental Principles — that HPB had no reason to mention it in the SD or

any of her other writings? What is the big deal about these "concepts" that a *Dzogchen* text has to make such a difficult and complex study out of them? Is there something fundamental in those exoteric Buddhist teachings that is missing? If so, I wonder why they left it out?

Critic: Probably the single most important teaching in all Buddhism is emptiness, and this HPB never discusses.

STUDENT: Positive denials unveil a lack of study. Really learned people have a plasticity of mind and presentation that give away the **security** of their position while the deniers and accusers live out their life on thin ice.

HPB mentions emptiness in this way:

The Arahat secret doctrine on cosmogony, admits but of one absolute, indestructible, eternal, and uncreated UNCONSCIOUSNESS (so to translate), of an element (the word being used for want of a better term) absolutely independent of everything else in the universe; a something ever present or ubiquitous, a Presence which ever was, is, and will be, whether there is a God, gods, or none; whether there is a universe, or no universe; existing during the eternal cycles of Maha Yugs, during the *Pralayas* as during the periods of *Manvantara*: and this is SPACE, the field for the operation of the eternal Forces and natural Law, the *basis* upon which take place the eternal intercorrelations of Akása-Prakriti, guided by the unconscious regular pulsations of *Sakti* — the breath or power of a conscious deity, the theists would say — the eternal energy of an eternal, unconscious Law, say the Buddhists.

Space then, or "Fan, Bar-nang" (Máha Sûnyatâ) or, as it is called by Lao-tze, the "Emptiness" is the nature of the Buddhist Absolute. (See Confucius' "*Praise of the Abyss*.") The word *Jiva* then, could never be applied by the Arahats to the *Seventh Principle*, since it is only through its correlation or

contact with matter that *Fo-hat* (*the Buddhist active energy*) can develop active *conscious* life; and that to the question “how can *Unconsciousness* generate *consciousness*?” the answer would be: “Was the seed which generated a Bacon or a Newton self-conscious?”

In an earlier footnote the emptiness of Form had been put forward:

Or, in other words “*Prakriti, Svabhavat* or *Akâsa* is — SPACE as the Tibetans have it: Space filled with whatsoever substance or no substance at all; *i.e.*, with substance so imponderable as to be only metaphysically conceivable. *Brahmâ*, then, would be the germ thrown into the soil of that field, and *Śakti*, that mysterious energy or force which develops it, and which is called by the Buddhist Arahats of Tibet — FOHAT. “That which we call form (*rupa*) is not different from that which we call space (*Śūnyatâ*) Space is not different from Form. Form is the same as Space; Space is the same as Form. And so **with the other skandhas**, whether *vedana*, or *sañjñâ*, or *samskara* or *vijñana*, **they are each the same as their opposite.**” ... (Book of *Sin-king* or the *Heart Sutra*. Chinese translation of the *Maha-Prajña-Paramita-Hridaya-Sutra*. Chapter on the *Avalokiteshwara*, or the *manifested Buddha*.) So that, the Aryan and Tibetan or Arhat doctrines agree perfectly in substance, differing but in names given and the way of putting it, a distinction resulting from the fact that the Vedantin Brahmans believe in Parabrahman, a *deific* power, impersonal though it may be, while the Buddhists entirely reject it. (Fn to “The Sevenfold Principle in Man”)

Another “Accidental” Discovery!!

Vitamin E is the premier fat-soluble vitamin for prostate cancer prevention. The most intriguing evidence comes from a Finnish study called the ATBC Trial. Researchers weren’t even looking for prostate cancer risk; they were trying to determine if vitamin E or beta-carotene worked to protect participants from lung cancer. (They didn’t!) But there was a stunning and **totally unexpected** finding. Participants who took vitamin E had a 30

percent reduced risk of diagnosis of prostate cancer. Researchers are now feverishly working to prove, in a more direct fashion, the protective benefit of vitamin E against prostate cancer. While we’re waiting for the conclusive findings, increasing your intake of vitamin E... makes a lot of sense.

Selenium, a mineral found in the soil, has been shown — **like vitamin E, quite by accident** — to prevent prostate cancer growth. Dr. Larry Clark, at the University of Arizona, had set up a trial for selenium and skin cancer. This trial included 1,300 subjects at risk for skin cancer (they were living in Arizona and already had one skin cancer). Half the group got selenium (200 micrograms once a day), and the other half got a placebo. Dr. Clark ran the study for eight years. At the end of the study, he saw no effect for selenium on skin cancer. But he discovered that the group that took selenium had a 50 percent reduction in prostate cancer diagnosis! (The study also showed a 50 percent reduction in lung cancer and colon cancer.)

Green tea has one of the highest antioxidant values known. The antioxidants in green tea are called polyphenols. One polyphenol, epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), has been shown in cell cultures to be a more powerful antioxidant than vitamin E or vitamin C. One study showed EGCG to prevent cancer growth and lower cholesterol. Another study found that drinking 3 to 10 cups of green tea a day is related to fewer numbers of certain cancers. Some studies suggest that black tea works as well as green tea. [Extracted from pp. 82-85, *The Prostate Cancer Protection Plan*, by Robert Arnot, M.D., published 2000 by Little Brown & Company]

Quotable Quotes

Long years must pass before the truths we have made for ourselves become our very flesh.

VALÉRY

The only joy in the world is to begin.

PAVESE

A truth that’s told with bad intent
Beats all the Lies you can invent.

WILLIAM BLAKE

The reformatory effect of punishment is a belief that dies hard, chiefly I think, because it is so satisfying to our sadistic impulses.

BERTRAND RUSSELL

To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Point out the Way is subtitled: "The Three Fundamentals and Questions Answered at an informal Ocean Class." John Garrigues conducted this class in the early 1930's at the U.L.T. in Los Angeles. It was taken down stenographically and published by *The Theosophical Movement*, Mumbai, India. The series ran from January, 1951 through July, 1954.

POINT OUT THE WAY

IV

QUESTIONS ANSWERED
AT AN INFORMAL "OCEAN" CLASS

CHAPTER ONE

Question: What is meant in Theosophy by "Soul"? Is man, as a Soul, the same as the Ego; that is, are Soul and the reincarnating Ego the same?

Answer: Suppose we take the statement made on the second page of the Ocean, that, even down to the minutest atom, no matter how we regard it or what we may name it, what visible or what changing appearances it may present — actually, "All is Soul and Spirit." If the question is, "What is Soul?" Soul is everything; — there is nothing that is not Soul and Spirit in its basic nature. Then, the question naturally arises, What is the distinction between the Soul and Spirit?

It would be worthwhile to look in *The Theosophical Glossary* for a brief memorandum by, H. P. B. under the word "Spirit." She says that the word "Spirit" ought in fact never to be used except in "direct relation to the Universal Consciousness" — but that a great confusion exists due to warring conceptions, so that the words "Soul" and "Spirit" are used indiscriminately. Now, if we take "Spirit" to refer first, last, and all the

time to Consciousness from the Universal point of view, just as we use the word "Matter" for the universal basis of all form; then, with Spirit as the universal basis of all consciousness, Soul would be the *individual* form of Spirit — just as we say "matter" and "body," not meaning two different things, but one, matter being the universal stuff from which all bodies are formed. Then we would have in "matter" and "body" a perfectly good analogy to what is metaphysically meant by the words "Spirit" and "Soul." If, then, we take man as a Soul — Life or Consciousness, which, as Mr. Judge says, is "ever evolving under the rule of law which is inherent in the whole" — man represents a Soul which has reached a given stage in the evolution of individual consciousness. The animal below us is no less Soul than we are; the Life in the vegetable and the mineral kingdom is no less Soul than we are; but their stage of evolution, their stage in the gradual progress towards individualized permanent consciousness, is behind ours. Using "Soul" in that sense, man as a Soul and as the reincarnating Ego mean one and the same thing.

Question: Was H.P.B. the first Great Teacher since the time of Jesus? If so, why should there have been so long a period between them, if another Great One is expected in 1975?

Answer: The life of a civilization is much, longer than the life of a single generation of men — call the life of a civilization about 2,000 years. The Great Teachers come at the birth of a new civilization, and the birth, the **genesis of the new**, is always **while the old is still on the**

stage. The men and women who will be running this country 10, 15, 20 years from now are on earth right now, and many of the boys and girls who will be running this earth 30 or 50 years, hence are here now. So there are cycles when Great Teachers come and there are cycles when lesser Teachers come. So far as Theosophy is concerned, the statement is made that Teachers have never been absent from the race. With regard to the present effort, it began in the 14th century with Tsong-kha-pa in Tibet, and with Western Teachers — bringing the same truths in Europe.

Question: Do we learn from observation and experience, or do we learn from experience only?

Answer: Is there one of us but knows, if he asks himself, that we gain knowledge both by experience and from observation? It is only when we look wholly outside that we ask such a question as that. In fact, in reading the *Ocean* or any of the other Theosophical books, we might try to bear in mind that there is that in us, a department of our nature, where the knowledge actually exists of anything and everything that the Teachers write about; then, we would begin to look within ourselves to corroborate, from the harvest of our own past experience, our observation of what the Teachers say. There is, however a vast difference between a man asleep or a man dreaming, and a man awake. **The thing to observe is that it's the same man, regardless of what state he is in.** Let us apply that to knowledge: if, this teaching is true, we have been active and a part of this solar system ever since it had a beginning — not to go farther back. There isn't a single state, a single

condition, a single form of life and being in this solar system that every one of us has not been through tens of thousands of times in all the kingdoms below as well as in the present human kingdom; in all of the seven states of consciousness, not merely the one we are aware of now. Where is this experience? It is asleep in us, and, in the religious man and the scientific man, it's dreaming. Our business, then, is to awaken to the same kind of consciousness that we have here and now in other states of matter and on other planes of life and being. Only a part of our nature is awake. At other times, in the past, other parts of our nature have been awake. We identify ourselves with the part of our nature that is awake; we do not recognize our whole nature, and so make no effort to rouse that part of us which is **present but not active.**

Question: Could we learn all that remains to be learned by observation?

Answer: Surely.

Question: Isn't observation the only way we learn anything about astronomy?

Answer: Learning from observation distinguishes man — even the savage, the lowest of men — from the brute kingdom. Animals cannot learn from observation; they can learn only by experience. Why can't they learn by observation? Well, the meanest of men always “sees double.” If the impulse rises in him, say, to run from something that he sees, he can say, “Well, shall I run or shall I stand fast and fight?” And no matter how much his legs want to run, he can choose to stand and fight, and do it. But when the same situation pre-

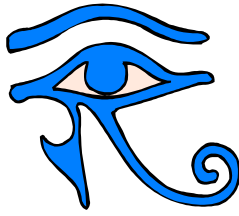
sents itself to the animal, it has only one perception, fight. It never reasons. Why doesn't it reason? It sees no contrast. It can see only one thing at a time. Now, if we observe ourselves, we will find that 99% of what we know comes from observation. What does the other 1% come from? Experience. We conduct ourselves by bringing what we see (observation) and what we experience into coadunition and consubstantiality: that is knowledge.

Question: Is not observation a form of experience?

Answer: Well, if we use the word "observation" in a subordinate, and the word "experience" in a general, sense, then all observation is a part of our experience; but if we take the two words as they stand "observation" and "experience," then experience is **direct perception** and observation is **indirect perception**. Patanjali says that the means of knowledge are three, not two — as we think of them when we say "observation and experience." The first means of knowledge, says Patanjali is direct perception — that is what we call experience. One who, has tasted tabasco sauce knows that it is liquid fire: that is direct perception. The second form of knowing is by the direct perception of others which they tell us about. They may tell us, "Don't drink that bottle of tabasco as you would drink a glass of water," and, attaching sincerity, good faith and common-sense to them, we only smell of the sauce or touch it with our tongue; we go slowly. So we have direct perception of our own, which is experience; we have the testimony of others in regard to their experience; and then we have, says Patanjali, a third

method, inference — the deductions which we make whether from our own experience or from the testimony of others. Now, there is a fourth method of knowledge that we seldom think about. It is peculiar to the Adepts. Have you ever thought of the expression, "Universal Brotherhood," or union, as the means par excellence of gaining knowledge? And yet the last paragraph of page 11 in this first chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy* tells us that the Masters get their knowledge that way, for they have "power over space, time, mind and matter" — they are perfected units. That is, they have had a sufficiency of experience, of testimony, of inference, to satisfy them that there is fundamentally no separateness at all between one being and another, one state and another. The separateness is in one's own eye. If we think so, there is separateness; if we don't think so, there isn't. Then They said to Themselves, why couldn't I put myself in that man's place? If I could just do that, I would feel as he feels; I would think as he thinks; I would get all of his experience instantly. Suppose they want to know about ants. Do they read books on ants? No. Do they hire people to go out and observe ants, experiment with, them, and get testimony about them? No. The Mahatma puts himself in the ant's place, and instantly he knows the universe as an ant knows it, feels it and lives it. This, then, is the method which Patanjali describes as peculiar to the ascetics.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



DNYANESHVARI

IV

[The *Dnyaneshvari* is mentioned many times by Madame Blavatsky, always in glowing terms. The following rendition is extracted from Manu Subedar's translation. The great Sage, Dnaneshwara Maharaj sang this work to his people when he was quite young. He did it in their native language, Marathi, about 700 years ago. It is his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*.]

Chapter III

ARJUNA: From what you have said, I gather that there is neither action nor the performer of action. If such is your deliberate opinion, why are you urging me on to take part in this terrible warfare? If you prohibit all actions, why do you ask me to do something which is heinous? You support the theory of no actions and yet you want me to do the unspeakable wrong of killing others. I am ignorant. I cannot find my way. If your advice is so contradictory, how can I discriminate? I despair of ever getting true knowledge. If the doctor himself administers poison to a patient, there can be no hope for him. If you put a blind man on the wrong track, or give intoxicants to a monkey, what would be his condition? It was because I did not know anything and I was in serious perplexity that I asked your advice, but you say one thing after the other which contradicts itself. I am your follower. I

put absolute confidence in you. You must tell me something that will enable me to judge. Am I to believe that you are deliberately doing this to test my mind on the pretext of giving advice? Are you in earnest, or are you trying to mislead me? Please say what you have to say in definite terms. I may be of feeble understanding, but I will listen very carefully. A medicine is a necessity, but it might also be palatable and pleasing. Teach me the truth in terms full of deep meaning, but also in terms which I can understand. You are the great preceptor and what falls from you ought not to be ambiguous. Tell me one definite thing, which it is proper for me to follow in this life and which will do me good in the next.

KRISHNA: While describing to you the path of action, I may incidentally mention to you the greatness of the path of knowledge (*Dnyana Marga*). You are puzzled for nothing, as you did not know what I was driving at. I have described to you the paths of action and knowledge. From the earliest ages these two paths have been introduced by Me in this world. Though apparently different, both paths lead to the same goal in the end, in the same manner as food gives sustenance, whether cooked by oneself or by others. The rivers flowing towards the west and towards the east appear to be different, but they are the same in the end, when they merge into the ocean.

Though directed towards the same end, the pursuit of one or the other of these paths *depends on the capacity of the seekers*. A bird catches the fruit of the tree in a single flight, but is it possible for a man to reach the fruit with the same swiftness? He will reach there gradually, *i.e.*, from one branch to another and will ultimately catch hold of

the fruit. Those who practice the path of meditation (Dnyana Marga) accomplish the end by one jump instantaneously like the bird. Other Yogis proceeding on the path of action, carrying out their proper duties (Dharma) reach salvation gradually.

Without the performance of duty, no one can attain the stage of non-desire. It is crass stupidity to expect any one to reach this end by neglecting his obligations. No one discards a boat, if he has to cross the river. So long as there is no freedom from desire, there is action, but when contentment arises all desires spontaneously disappear. Those who aim for Self-knowledge should not turn from their duties. It is not possible for one to perform actions or to abandon them at will. To talk of relinquishing actions is to talk nonsense, because, however much one may wish, he cannot abandon them. So long as there are natural conditions (Prakriti), actions are being done, because all actions are subject to the three qualities (Gunas) and are being done involuntarily. If you said you would do nothing, will your ears cease to hear, or the eyes fail to see, will the nose lose its function, will breathing be stopped, or will the mind become free from all ideas? Will hunger and thirst disappear? Will the cycle of sleep and waking stop? Will feet refuse to move and above all, will you be free from the chain of life and death? It is futile to believe that one can take up or throw away actions. A man, sitting in a carriage, moves because he is in the carriage, though he may be himself motionless. Even a sage performs actions by the force of nature and by the tendencies of the organs of action. So long as one is linked with nature (Prakriti), his abandonment of actions is impossible.

[To be continued]

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4 – DO WE SEE LOVED ONES IN HEAVEN? (71)

11 – CAN WE REMEMBER PAST LIVES? (73-6)

18 – HEREDITY PROVES REINCARNATION (72)

25 – WHY DO WE REINCARNATE? (81-3)

(STUDY TEXT: "THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY")

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25th Conversations on Occultism

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- 4 RVO **Panel:** Spirituele discipline... een noodzaak? AC/DR
- 11 HDK Beheerst toeval of rechtvaardigheid ons leven?
- 18 AC Wereldkarma en individuele verantwoordelijkheid
- 25 RVO De eeuwigheidswaarde van het geheugen

April:

- 1 DR De Theosofia van de Nag Hammadi geschriften
- 8 PW De occulte oorzaken van ziekte en gezondheid
- 15 DR Van chrèstos naar Christos: de inwijdingsweg **Pasen**
- 22 HDK **Panel:** Wat is de basis van menselijk geluk? AC/TD
- 29 TD Voeding en het respect voor de lagere natuurrijken

Mei:

- 6 HDK Een spirituele grondslag voor opvoeding en onderwijs
- 13 PW Het astrale lichaam en het astrale licht
- 20 DR Helderziendheid, telepathie en telekinese
- 27 RVO **Panel:** Paranormale verschijnselen en spirituele vermogens DR/PW

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Argumenten tegen het materialisme

De strijd van de Theosofie om erkenning

Kloneren: weldaad of misdaad?

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- 3 juin Expériences de mort imminente : quelles leçons pour la vie?

Vendredis de 20h15 à 21h30

- 06 avril Y a-t-il un bonheur sans compassion ni sagesse?
- 13 avril Le mystère initiatique de Pâques
- 20 avril Peut-on prouver la survivance de l’Âme?
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KARMA AND THE EMOTIONS

The most important thing for us to know is that afflictive emotion is our ultimate enemy and a source of suffering. Once it develops within our mind, it immediately destroys our peace of mind, and eventually destroys our health, and even our friendships with other people. All negative activities such as killing, bullying, cheating and so forth, stem from afflictive emotion. This, therefore, is our real enemy. An external enemy may be harmful to you today, but tomorrow could become very helpful, whereas the inner enemy is consistently destructive. Moreover, wherever you live the inner enemy is always there with you, and that makes it very dangerous. In contrast, we can often keep an external enemy at some kind of distance. In 1959, for example, we escaped from Tibet since escape was a physical possibility; but in the case of this inner enemy, whether I am in Tibet, or in the Potala, or in Dharamsala, or here in London, wherever I go it follows me. I think the inner enemy is even there in meditation; and even if I visualize a mandala, I may still find this enemy in its very center! So this is the main point we have to realize: the real destroyer of our happiness is always there within us. So what can we do about it? If it is not possible to work on that enemy and to eliminate it, then I think we had better forget get the spiritual path and rely on alcohol and sex and other such things to improve our lives! However, if there is a possibility of eliminating the inner enemy, then I think we should take the opportunity of having a human body, a human brain and a good human heart, and combine these strengths to reduce and ultimately uproot it. This is why human life is considered to be so precious according to the Buddhist teachings, for it alone enables a

being to train and transform the mind, mainly by virtue of intelligence and reasoning. Buddhists distinguish between two kinds of emotion. One type is without reason, and is just based on prejudice. Hatred is one of these. This sort of emotion will rely on superficial reasons, of course, such as “this person has hurt me terribly,” but deep down, if you pursue that reasoning further, you find it does not go very far. Emotions without proper reason are what we call negative emotions. The other kind of emotion, which includes compassion and altruism, is emotion with reason because through deep investigation you can prove it is good, necessary and useful. Furthermore, although by nature it is a type of emotion, it is actually in accord with reason and intelligence. In fact, it is by combining our intelligence and emotion that we can change and transform our inner world. So long as the inner enemy is there, and so long as we are under its control, there can be no permanent happiness. Understanding the need to defeat this enemy is true realization, and developing a keen desire to overcome it is the aspiration to seek freedom, technically called renunciation. Therefore this practice of analyzing our emotions and our inner world is very crucial.

THE DALAI LAMA
A Simple Path, pp. 111, 12, & 15

