

# THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST

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**Editor**

**S. SUNDARAM**

Cover Page: **“The pride of the peacock is the Triumph of  
God.”**

**William Blake**

## THE PRESENT NEED

I WOULD like to share a few thoughts about this present moment and what might be the need. Can we recognize it and respond? What is the opportunity of this time, given our particular stage of development? Our initial understanding of the meaning of ‘Theosophy’ was largely given to us through H. P. Blavatsky. Her work was difficult. During the course of her life she lived without much in the way of material riches, yet she was able to participate in founding what has grown and now finds roots in seventy countries, with resources ranging from finances to land to its most important one — 26,000 members who have found meaning and value in Theosophy.

HPB was not suffering from any delusion that her work would be readily accepted. This is fortunate, because during her lifetime she found rejection and accusation that would stop normal people in their tracks. As angrily as she may have spoken, she was continually willing to pick up and try again. She said that the world to which she was speaking would not understand Theosophical teachings, and that it would not be until the twentieth century that the teachings she gave could begin to be understood. There was a certain growth that would have to take place in the human scene. Some of that growth has been in the scope of the scientific worldview. Thus the Theosophy she presented and the movement that began through her efforts was directed towards the future. From what can be seen, it looks as though that future is now, as the possibility for these teachings to take root in a way that is meaningful to the world at large is this moment we now inhabit.

There is an African expression that says: ‘The disease that is hidden cannot be cured.’ I would like to examine some of the hidden obstacles to the full expression of this Theosophical worldview, recognizing that wherever we find obstacles, we necessarily find opportunities. Over the past four or five hundred years the way we see the world has shifted. Our present worldview has become so all-encompassing that

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\* Public Lecture delivered at the international Convention, Adyar, 30 December 2014.

we do not notice it, but it guides our every decision and has become worldwide in its scope. It has its roots in the development of the contemporary view of science. The scientific worldview is relatively new. Four to five hundred years ago the particular way of seeing the world that we describe as ‘scientific’ was relatively unknown. Today’s prevailing approach to science has been called ‘reductionism’ or ‘materialistic reductionism’. This worldview that has been embraced and promoted is reductionistic because, by definition, the scope of consideration for contemporary science is the material realm. The cosmos as examined, observed, and studied is the physical realm. Thinking of what is Divine, or consciousness, is not measurable. Its effects may be, but consciousness itself has been excluded from the reductionistic worldview. This is one of the factors that have had a very limiting effect. It would not be such a difficult problem were it not that, in reality, this narrow worldview has become so dominant, that it is now almost the religion of the world.

One of the difficulties with a view that looks at the physical world as the total universe, is that we find ourselves now in a condition that has never existed earlier. There has never been a time in human history where the cosmos has been regarded as anything but sacred. That is no longer the case. It has been described as a ‘desacralized’ cosmos, and this has implications. The main way we tend to arrive at our decisions about anything is impelled by the values we have cultivated. These values have been diminished.

A further stream that has coalesced with reductionism also had its beginnings five or six hundred years ago. It was started during the time of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, when the Church had the final say. With the tumbling of that sense of center and value that Luther (who began that whole movement) set afoot, something spread abroad. What has developed is a misshapen interpretation of the fundamental concept ingrained in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, that ‘all men are created equal’. It has not isolated itself to the West. It is engulfing the world.

This trend is beyond mere individualism, which is part of the natural spiritual cycle in which the individual is able to establish its own central core and to operate from it. In its ideal form the individual devel-

ops this core so that it can then be turned over as conscious service to the whole. As someone who grew up as a student in US schools, I had to learn this Declaration by heart: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.' This is a profound statement if it is understood from the level at which it is intended. In terms of our Divinity every one of us is equal. We share the same Source: there is no separation, no division. From the divine perspective even equality is an inadequate term. All is one. There is nothing to be divided, to compare or contrast. At the level of popular discussion, this understanding has been lost.

We all know that in the world there are great beings whose wisdom, experience, knowledge, education, and development far exceeds the norm. Yet, we are at a stage where 'all men are created equal' has come to mean, 'Why should I listen to this person when I am equal to him?' Hopefully this is a mindset that we do not find so active in ourselves, but it is certainly active in the world. In the early days of the prophet Mohammed's work, one of his followers was asked a question along this line: 'What's so great about Mohammed? He's a man just like any other man.' The response of this wise person was: 'The prophet is like other men in the same way that a ruby is like other stones.' We have to reawaken our sensitivity to these inner qualities. In the face of the prevailing current of thought, this sensitivity has a way of slipping away from us.

Thus you have these two trends active in the world today: the materialistic reduction of our worldview, coupled with a self-centred individualism. This way of seeing the world produces a long list of obvious consequences. There are a host of crises in the world that we are all having to face which have become pronounced. Some of the problems that we see around us such as global warming, climate change, deforestation, rapidly growing deserts, water shortages, rapid uncontrolled urbanization, pollution of the earth, air, and water, are all increasing at an alarming rate. In 64 countries around the world, 600 different groups are waging war at this moment. These are just simple facts. This is the world we are living in and the problems we must address. If we choose not to, then we will experience consequences and will pass them on to future generations.

Without having to develop some new theory or new technology, every one of these pressing problems has a solution available now! The knowledge required is here. That should cause us to ask a question: 'If the knowledge is available for their solution, why are these problems not solved? Why do they persist?' It seems that however great our knowledge might be, perhaps knowledge alone is not enough. It is a bit too small for big problems. Something that exceeds mere knowledge is required, something that was part of the reason the TS was founded.

I would like to share two quotes — one is from Albert Einstein and the other from H. P. Blavatsky. The first one is: 'No problem can be solved on the level of consciousness at which it was created.' Another way of putting it is: 'We don't know who discovered water, but we know it wasn't a fish.' We swim within the confines of an ocean of thought — a particular narrow band of thinking and emoting that we identify as 'the real world'. We are those fish, and we just do not know. The HPB quote was in answer to a question about 'What is the world?', and she said: 'The world is man living in his personal nature.' They are similar quotes. What we perceive as the real world is merely the reflection of our collective personal natures. But it is a world with very clear limitations that need to be addressed.

As an example of the limitations of mere knowledge, let us take the case of the wars that are going on around the world, violence, terrorism, and so on. What is the solution that we apply today? We all know that the solution is greater violence, and if this is not enough to quell the adversary, we resort to levels of violence so extreme that there can be no response at that point. This is what we imagine to be a solution, that peace can come from war. Obviously the history of the world demonstrates it does not work. That has not meant that we do not keep trying!

Basic logic would tell us that if we do harm and destroy the lives of the loved ones of another, it cannot produce positive results. The daughters, sons, family, neighbours, friends of those people cannot feel kindly towards us. Such means may temporarily suppress further violence, but they cannot create a genuine peace. From the theosophical point of view we are aware that with the sudden deaths that occur in war, the body dies, but the consciousness does not disappear. It goes on

to become part of the pervading atmosphere, the ocean in which we fish are swimming, a consciousness now marked by fear, anger, and hatred. Is this the solution to peace? It just does not work.

We can apply this same analysis to our approach to spiritual study and the path. Initially most of us are attracted to the pursuit of the spiritual because within ourselves we experience intense suffering in different ways. For some it is physical, for others it is emotional, and for some it is in the mind, but suffering is universal. When we start to find out that perhaps there is some glimmer of hope along this line of spiritual practice, how do we approach it? It is said that at the root of all of our problems is a fundamental and profound ignorance. With regard to this ignorance our problem is not that we do not know, we know many things. The problem with this fundamental ignorance is that what we know and see is wrong.

The example often used is that of a man who sees a coiled rope in the road, but thinks it is a snake. His heart starts beating fast; he gets ready to run because of his fear of snakes. His thought and bodily processes respond in this way because the 'reality' he perceives is wrong. When he realizes the error of his perception, his responses change. In our effort to address this ignorance, what is the approach that we take? Our normal thinking tells us that ignorance is remedied by more knowledge. Our sense is that we need to study more. So we pick up the right books. After we finish one we need to study another, and another, and another, in the hope that there is a quantitative solution to the qualitative shift in perception that we are pursuing. When we reduce the world to a material one, then the answer to the problem is 'more'. Clearly something needs to change with this approach.

Annie Besant told a story about a time when she was going to Chicago on a train. She was half asleep, when all of a sudden some heavy sense of gloom and despair awakened her. She had not come into Chicago yet and did not know what it was that caused this feeling in her. Chicago at that time was called 'the slaughterhouse to the world'. Animals by the millions were being slain. She realized that what she was feeling was this overarching atmosphere that breathed out from the city. It was well known that in the neighbourhoods of those slaughterhouses crime rate and violence were much higher. Very often the crimes that

were committed were with the very weapons used in the slaughter industry! The atmosphere we live in affects us.

So how do we address the types of problems that we have in the world today? Mr A. P. Sinnett, one of the early Theosophists and recipient of many of the letters from the Mahatmas, wrote several books, one of which was *Esoteric Buddhism*. In it he describes the traditional teaching methods for occultism and the spiritual life. He wrote that those methods sought to impress every new idea upon the mind 'by provoking the perplexity' that this new idea ultimately relieved. It is a nice way of saying that the learning experience in terms of the life of a person who commits to a spiritual path is through the progressive creation and resolution of crises. This is true for us in our individual cycle of unfoldment. It is equally true for the planetary cycle. The world is in a period of crisis, a perplexity that has been provoked by a narrow line of thought that has been imposed on the planet and its inhabitants, which by now has gone about as far as it can go. The fresh idea that is to be impressed upon the mind of humanity is fresh only in the sense that our current crises are preparing us to see it and embrace it. It is as old as humanity itself. This is the idea that oneness, unity, and brotherhood can be experienced.

For us as Theosophists, how do we move beyond this particular stage we are in, where we are rich in knowledge but poor in solutions? The first thing is to realize that knowledge in and of itself will not be enough. There is something greater that we know as 'wisdom'. This wisdom is not the sole possession of great ones who live outside of our realm. By its very nature it is part of our being — 'nearer than breathing, closer than hands and feet'.

In *The Voice of the Silence* HPB describes the *pâramitâs*, the perfections, of which the greatest and final one is *prajñâ*, or wisdom. It is said that each of these perfections is an antidote to various conditions of mind and heart. Patience, one of the *pâramitâs*, is an antidote to anger, violence, and so on. It is also said that wisdom is the antidote to every possible ill that there is, and that a little bit of a realization of wisdom is sufficient to alleviate many problems. We all speak about wisdom. This is probably the best we can do because we do not know. Wisdom could be described as the perception of what is real. It is not foreign to us.

I will share a poem about one man's experience. It was written by a great poet who was also a member of the TS: William Butler Yeats. When he was fifty years old he had a brief experience. He described it in a beautiful short poem. It is an experience which probably all of us can relate to:

My fiftieth year had come and gone,  
I sat, a solitary man,  
An open book and empty cup  
Upon the marble table-top.  
While on the street and crowd  
I gazed My body of a sudden blazed;  
And twenty minutes more or less  
It seemed, so great my happiness,  
That I was blessed and could bless.

This poem is one man's experience of a descent of buddhi, the intuition. The twenty minutes of this blessed awareness was life-changing. I think all of us have experienced some measure of this. Maybe we did not get our full twenty minutes, or it was just a brief moment where for whatever reason our normal self-absorption disappeared and in that vacuum something came to fill it. Looking back on the experience we might call it a wonderful moment. We might say, 'I was happy', 'I was peaceful', but the basis of that experience is that somehow we had a moment where the gnawing, constantly crying voice of self-grasping died away. And it is enough to last a lifetime. This is an intimation of the wisdom that Theosophy speaks about.

To quote from the Bible, there is a Psalm that describes this type of experience. One line from it says: 'He utters his voice and the Earth melteth.' Those moments that are most real in our lives, are those when the seemingly solid Earth disappears from view, and we encounter something profound that defies our later descriptions, yet we still try to describe. This is the basis of the answer to this present need. Whatever it is that we know will not be enough. Whatever our specific talents may be will not be enough. Whatever we have in terms of finances, resources, will not be enough to meet the need that is upon us. But whatever we have, whether it is a grain of sand or a million dollars, when it

is touched by the blessing of this illuminating consciousness within all of us, and that we have all experienced to some degree, then it becomes transformed. That is the transformation that takes place, the need that is before us.

What we have to do now is to learn to live at our limits. All of us feel as if we are limited beings and we try to confine ourselves within these limitations, never straying too far. How do we know where our limits are? Because where we are among people we do not know, and we start to feel uncomfortable, we become aware that maybe this is a wall that we were not aware of. Where we see various types of sufferings and feel like turning away, we recognize there is a wall. When we sit in our meditation practice and on this particular day, unlike other days, some sense of an unfamiliar expansiveness starts to invade the border of our consciousness, and we quake at its approach because we do not know what it might hold for us — another limit, a boundary appears. These are the places where we have to learn to live, because what we will find as we approach these limits, is that they recede. None of them can confine us. In the process of facing one limitation, we develop our capacity to face the very next one.

There is a need for something that the Theosophical Society came into being to provide: we find the means to accomplish within the hearts of every one of us. Nothing is missing, nothing is lacking, nothing more is needed. What I would ask for each of us is that the compass we apply to our living needs to be a reliable one. The tools of science, of our various training and talents are useful in their way, but the only clear point that will guide us is our own experience of that which we have perceived as profound, as true. What I would ask for all of us in facing the ever-present need of this world, is that we refer continually to that inner centre. That is what links us with one another, and that alone will bring solutions that will lead us to the next turn in this cycle of the growth of humanity.

## KNOWING AND BEING\*\*

“As I walked by myself, I talked to myself; and myself replied to me; And the questions myself then put to myself; with their answers, I give to thee”.

Roger Bacon in his Essay ‘*On Truth*’ wrote, “If you ask me, I know not, but I know, if you ask me not.” ‘Are we not drawn onward, we few, drawn onward to new era!’ - composed Kamala Das, the Malayalam (also a palindrome) poetess. This pertinent palindrome expects to exact a positive response from ‘we few’ theosophists, fewer still the world over, if not ever onward, at least back and forth like the proverbial monkey climbing up the oily bamboo-pole, picking up momentum after every backslide. Unless we see ourselves as we are, we simply postulate illusion. A questioning mind, an observing mind, an enquiring mind, the spirit of inquiry is essential for understanding one’s own real self, to comprehend the mysteries of this marvellous Nature; the Cosmic Truth, the unity and harmony of life within and without. The mystics call it the ground of ‘Being’. Life is something extraordinary, wide and profound, and it is a great mystery, a vast realm in which we function as human beings. We must work with ourselves and on ourselves in order that every step forward is an extension of consciousness (Knowing) and a transformation of consciousness (Being). Theosophy is ancient wisdom in so far as it sincerely teaches what is known to be true and enables us to be the ‘Truth’. Only when who you are is no more, that you cease to identify yourself with your ‘Knowing’, that you have transformed yourself into ‘Being’. We have to ascend to the *Buddhic* plane for only in that plane there is the possibility of ‘Being.’ When all the bonds of this heart are broken then this mortal puts on immortality, say the Upanishads.

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“When to himself this form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams, when he has ceased to hear the many he may discern the One - the inner sound that kills the outer”, says HPB. “I am silence among the secrets” says Krishna in the *Gita* (10.38). Plato called it passing from the phenomenal world to the noumenal world. We are all concerned with the changing phenomena and do not see the noumena. “Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence. Listen only to the voice which is soundless”, says *Light on the Path*. ‘**Koan**’ in Zen Buddhism is a brief paradoxical statement used as a discipline in meditation, viz. when both hands are clapped a sound is produced; listen to the sound of one hand clapping. These things are spiritually discerned said, St. Paul... When the mind is perfectly still, not rippled by world affairs, it will reflect the glory of the Self, said Patanjali. The cream, the butter is in the milk indistinguishable. But when it is churned the cream comes up leaving the whey below. The body and soul are like the whey and the cheese... Even the highest revelations are worth no more than the power of realization or *Atmanubhuti* that comes with them. Thus life be studied most devotedly, and lived most divinely. Theosophy would better be treated as a study in axiology. In individual pursuit of perfection lies the acorn of world redemption.

Religion addresses the heart; science addresses the mind, whereas spirituality addresses the soul. Religion is not a theory of God; it’s a spiritual consciousness, an oracular resonance. There is quite a difference between contact with reality and opinion about it, between the mystery of godliness and belief in God. While realization is a fact, the theory of reality is an inference — theories can be disputed, but facts cannot be denied. True wisdom is different from much learning; much learning means little wisdom; it elicits to deprogramme acquired knowledge. The daunting task is not to learn as much as to unlearn in order to ‘Be Truth’. Prophet Muhammad equated a pedant to an ass carrying a load of books! Past scholars studied to improve themselves; Today’s scholars study to impress others, said Confucius. The Mahachohan says: ‘To be true, religion and philosophy must offer solutions to every problem ... ‘The Truth is more important than the fact’. Put away the books, the description, the tradition, the authority, and take the journey of self-discovery, said JK. “You can go on reading scriptures, but you will get liberation only when you forget the scriptures,” says *Ashtavakra Gita*. Life is easy to chronicle but bewildering to practise, said EM Forster.

Truth is always half-said and half-understood when it is expressed in words, said Hermann Hesse in *Siddhartha*. It is with the inner ear that we hear *The Voice of the Silence* or the higher self – the spiritual soul as it is often called by HPB.

We are all prisoners imprisoned in a cell with only five windows of the senses by which to see the world. Then we have skylights which are conceptions we make from these sense perceptions. When are we to come face to face with whole sky, after escaping from the little cell? “God within cannot be apprehended by the eyes, by words, by any of the senses, by mortification of the flesh or by rituals. When the understanding becomes clear and the essential character becomes purified, then in meditation one realizes the one and only god,” says *Mundakopanishad*. Master KH points out: ‘you can know the real from the unreal, the true from the false by consciously guarding against the causes of self-deception, by purification of your motives, the study and correction of your faults’. If you have any intuition you will work out ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ and perhaps realize whence the failure, he iterates.

Truth recedes to the background when the speaker about Truth is very much in the foreground, asserted Bro N. Sri Ram. Truth is God’s decree. And hence there is no religion higher than Truth. “Truth is a pathless land” – it’s easy to know but most difficult to obtain, to be Truth. Life is not just about finding yourself; it’s also about creating yourself in the light of Truth. Man can come to it through observations, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, i.e. self-study can find it, and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection. Truth is ubiquitous in ‘Being’ rather than in ‘Knowing’. Insight into Truth is unmediated, direct, when the mind ceases to describe, ascertain or label it. The content of his consciousness is his entire existence, said JK. “...the adept sees and feels and lives in the very source of all fundamental truths. The adept becomes, he is not made” – we have to reap but what we have sown, states the Mahatma letters. To know is good, to live be better, and to be that is perfection, said the Mother. Truth is to be found in living truth as it transforms the mind and consciousness – the great thing is to do it, to do it, and to do it as Picasso would reiterate. The journey of self-realization is the only true journey to the inner recesses of our mind. The unexamined life is not worth living, said Socrates; hence know thyself. The end of life is to

be like unto God; and the Soul following God, will be like unto Him; He being the beginning, middle and end of all things, he iterates. Ram and Laxshman knocked on the cottage door of Guru Vasishtha only obviously to be asked ‘who you are’ before opening the door. Both the brothers responded unequivocally from the threshold outside: “That is why we have come.”

The real evil proceeds from human intelligence and its origin rests entirely with reasoning man who dissociates himself from Nature. The purpose and meaning of life is a mystery. However, the key to finding answers to questions about the mystery of life lies in Self-Knowledge or *Atmabodha* as Sankara calls it. All transcendental things will be known... when one gets the knowledge of the Self, he is liberated from the cycle of births and deaths. Mrs Besant said, “ There is no life without consciousness, and no consciousness without life... we have called consciousness turned inward by the name of life, and life turned outward by the name of consciousness”. Theosophy regards all sacred books as inferior to the Book of Nature on account of the human element contained in it. The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to meet your nature with Nature. Simplicity is a natural wealth; luxury is an artificial poverty. Nothing else in Nature takes time off to think about what it does. The trees and animals do not know that they are intelligent although they are, it does not matter to them either. The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough, said Tagore. ‘Men Argue; Nature acts’, said Voltaire. A theosophist is in a sense a Romanticist like Shelley or Wordsworth. Blake or Byron, Keats or Coleridge, for they add strangeness to beauty, the beauty of life, that beauty which is a light in the heart with a sense of wonder and mysticism. A Blake can only write, “For everything that lives is holy; life delights in life”. A Shelley can only intone, “Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter still”. “Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty. That is all ye know and all ye need to know”, wrote Keats. It’s much like Gandhi’s maturation from “God is Truth” to “Truth is God”. Wisdom is the intellect illumined by intuition – a Renaissance of human values. We become enlightened not by imagining figures of light, but by making darkness conscious, remarked Carl G. Jung. There is not enough darkness in the entire world to put out the light of one small candle, observed Robert Alden.

God and Nature are identical in their substance and thus exchangeable. God gives us a chance to reinvent ourselves every morning. Life reveals its beauty at every stage. Witness and enjoy both the ever-changing and never-changing. We can know the life of our own thoughts (Knowing) when we strengthen them regularly and find that they return repeatedly to our awareness, to our 'Being'. We can think of everything in creation as ceaselessly singing its song if there is gulf between Knowing and Being. *The Secret Doctrine* was surely written to help awaken humanity's intuition, an inner sense which is probably still largely dormant. Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do and remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck. "If you can bear the pain of not being pleased with yourself, you will provide an acceptable home for Jesus", says St. Teresa of Lisieux. Not all that counts in life can be counted and not all that can be counted counts, said Einstein. When we say something to be number one, does that count begins from when you 'know' how to count or is it 'being' counted on merit. 'Never does it happen that Nature says one thing and wisdom another'. Everything is managed on its own and that is the grace and gift of Nature we are all endowed with. Jesus insists on love as a precondition for truth, for truth can be seen only through the eyes of love. Feeling is an intrinsic awareness as heat is to fire – feeling of righteousness is eternal, theory of righteousness is ephemeral. Nietzsche explains the metamorphosis of the spirit. It is tranquillity of mind that we are able to transmute this false mind of death and rebirth into a clear intuitive mind and realize the primal and enlightening Essence of Mind, says Theosophy. Use the mind to transcend the mind for an inspired living. 'You are not this mind, but it is yours to use' ... says *At the Feet of the Master*. Be your own witness, and then be the witness yourself in order to 'Be Truth'. The witness-self has to beckon to a dimension beyond the transitory.

The ancient Masters didn't try to educate the people, but kindly taught them to not know, said Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching* compiled by Lao Tzu is best translated as "*The Book of How Things Unfold*." The Tao though translated variously as the Path, the Single Principle, cannot be adequately understood or explained through the rational or discursive mind. There is that most beautiful understanding of ordinariness and extraordinariness. Being like everything else means you are ordinary;

but consciously knowing that you are like everything else, is extraordinary. To see the extraordinary in the ordinary is at the heart of being enlightened. It's the experience of extraordinary moments of prime existence. Gandhi saw spinning and weaving as a method of self-realization and sacrifice for the spinning-wheel helped him to keep all negative thoughts at bay. His autobiography *My Experiments with Truth* is a quest for ways of attaining Absolute Truth. He presented all that is noblest in the spirit of man; he was living truth at last. His thoughts, words, and deeds are in complete concordance with each other. For him *Satya* or *Dharma* is the science of sustainable living. To him religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil. Truth awakened 'Truth' in Gandhi, said Tagore. Like Socrates, he believed that all work is an appeal from the 'seen' to the 'unseen'. Doing out rooms and roads is not less a spiritual experience or even cooking your own food. Knowing much is ignorance; knowing only One is wisdom and that is "Being Truth". 'Knowing' has to function like osmosis to be 'Being'. Just like gold and diamond that are obtained by much searching and mining Truth can be found connected with our 'Being' by digging deep into the mine of our soul. Cultivate the heart to raise a harvest of truth, righteousness, peace and love. Conscience and Consciousness are the two flames that enlighten life's journey. A human is not living without consciousness and is not human without conscience. Consciousness in its primary form is only outward awareness, in stabilized state it is self-referral consciousness, and in 'Pure' form it is our inner world that reconnects with the divinity that exists everywhere. People have a power as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Gandhi.

HPB describes *Antakarana* as 'Manas purified of egotism'. When *Buddhi* and *Manas* are one, we have passed over the bridge and crossed the bar. The Master Hilarion said: 'Courage ... belongs to the immortal self, who knows himself to be immortal'. Only when the mind is without any conformity as a true individual, you know what you are and that is the 'Being', said JK. "Out of the furnace of man's life, and its black smoke (its darkness, ignorance and misery) winged flames arise, flames purified, soaring onward". "The soul like a lark flies higher than any other bird; so high that you cannot see. When it is very high, it rests on the air on its wings". And that is the mystic state, when the mind is



absolutely steady and the emotions all quiet. We need to possess that '*Alaya*' and be with the Over-Soul. The undefiled Self is the sole witness of the modifications of the elements of nature, mind and body. We need to live an undivided existence between 'Knowing' and 'Being' – being what we know – for division has become humanity's second nature deeply entrenched in the human psyche. Isn't it an irony that the part makes more sense than the whole? We see the world piece by piece, but the whole of which these are shining parts, is the soul. This unthinking artificial division is the basis of all strife. All other disciples of Guru Drono advanced in their learning whereas Yudhisther was found in profound ponderance at the very initial discourse of *Satyamvada* before going on to *Dharmamchara* for he wanted to make it out, to internalise and experience 'Truth'. Theosophy implies that there is in human beings a faculty higher than reason – an 'interior principle' or spiritual intuition through which we can reach the Divine Wisdom. True knowledge is '**of the Spirit and in Spirit alone**'.

It's only by *atma-vichara* or Self-enquiry that we can realize the inner Self. It invokes awareness of the source from which mind and ego emanate. Any attempt to get rid of ego by methods other than *atma-vichara* is akin to a thief turning policeman to apprehend the thief that is himself. Knowing Truth is not enough to keep us away from sorrow and suffering, but Being Truth does as the self is without ego. The Vedanta says we have no problem, we are the problem! We are never deceived, we deceive ourselves, said Goethe. Life is a series of open-ended questions. Process the mind by examining every thought and emotion, within the framework of righteousness, for spirituality is the *summum bonum* of life in all its aspects. The spiritual world is a reality and not a figment of imagination. The truth is close to us but illusion casts a spell. Our truest life is when we are in our dreams awake, said Thoreau. Life is nothing but 'Life Breath' of 'Logos' – the 'Logos' in the form of consciousness takes a size and shape and form. **Truly in God, 'we live, move, and have our being'**. Sri Aurobindo advises to organize life around truth. The higher truth of existence lies within. Plato searched for the ultimate reality beyond existence. Aristotle found such reality in existence itself. Ultimate reality is singular like time and space. The basis of the search for truth is nonviolence, said Gandhi who was a pilgrim on the path of Self-realization. A truthful person is all

virtues, great power of conviction, a source of joy to all, as all possible virtues and all such qualities are modified expressions of Truth. Morality is the basis of things and truth is the substance of morality, said Gandhi.

Human mind is one of the oldest occult truths. To believe in God is one thing, to know God entirely another. He who looks inwardly at the Self revels in the Self; he who revels in the Self looks inwardly at the Self, says *Acarangasutra*. Sufis tell of two paths to transcendence: One is to look out at the universe and see yourself, the other is to look out at yourself and see the universe. Truth is attainable only through intuition; it cannot be received second hand. When the sense of self is obliterated, we remember that we belong to the cosmic ensemble. It is only in abiding in the 'Being' that one realizes the Truth. **Knowing is just knowledge; Being is enlightenment.** Physical world is so evanescent and transitory that the mission is to get away from it to merge with the Supreme like a salt-doll desirous of experiencing the ocean. Any caterpillar who tries to know itself would never become a butterfly; it has to be the Being. All change is illusory as it is only change of environment and embodiment. What dies is what belongs to this world of form and illusion. The ultimate goal is truth which is in the plenitude of the present. Universal truths are better expressed in the present tense and sense. The ultimate truth is that there is neither creation nor destruction, neither birth nor death; neither destiny nor free will, neither any path nor any destination. The wise know that the virtuous are invincible – that's the difference between the instructed and the ignorant – they understand that the wise life, which leads to tranquillity, comes from conforming to Nature and reason. As God is one and indivisible, so is his wisdom all-embracing. The glory of the Spirit is in it that it includes all and excludes none. The Sun of Divine Wisdom shines on everyman's face and illuminates it.

Just as the spider emits the thread, the web out of itself and again withdraws it into itself, the mind projects the world out of itself and again resolves it into itself. When the world appears, the Self does not appear; and when the Self appears, rather shines, the world does not appear. The mind is a wondrous power riding in itself. It causes all thoughts to arise. The energy of the mind is the essence of life, said Aristotle. Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom, he iterates.

‘Mind precedes all phenomena. Mind masters most. Everything is mind-made’, said the Buddha. Apart from thoughts there is no such thing as mind. When matter is reduced to its essence it is mind. There is no dichotomy of matter and spirit. They are one Integer; that is the sole reality. Thought is the nature of the mind. Realization dawns upon the seeker that neither mind nor ego really exists. The universal mind, not being limited by ego, has nothing outside itself and is therefore only aware. The relation between Self and mind is like that of a clear crystal and its background. The crystal takes the colour of the background object placed against it. The body is the creation of ego, said Ramana Maharshi. That which rises as ‘I’ in the body is the mind. Nonetheless, the thought ‘who am I?’ will destroy all other thoughts, and like the stick used for stirring the funeral pyre, it will itself be burnt up in the end. Only then there will be self-realization. In this enquiry ‘who am I?’ the mind goes back to its source, and the thought that arises subsides. The simplest answer to this query is, that ‘I am human’ and that ‘I know I am human’. And the profound answer is that ‘I am awareness’. When all knowledge comes to an end that wisdom arises; where Knowing Truth ceases that being Truth begins – where ‘Knowing’ lost me the ‘Being’ found my Self. This awareness is by its very nature ‘Being-Consciousness-Bliss’ (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*). The perception of the world as an objective reality ceases, just like the serpent in the rope ceases; the vision of the true nature of the Self is obtained. It’s transcendental; ‘Being Truth’ transcends ‘Knowing Truth’. Universal in ‘Being’ is the skill of a Master. In knowing the Truth we are at the ‘*beta*’ level, the usual busy waking consciousness whereas ‘Being Truth’ takes place at the ‘*alpha*’ level when the body and mind are deeply relaxed. Evolved souls are powerhouses of divine energy. If both sides of the pituitary plexus are fully developed, one becomes self-knowing i.e. ‘Being’. Meditation is a process of ‘Being’.

Cosmic vision alone can reveal the Truth. It is with the eyes of the soul, of one’s vibrant inner feeling, that one has to observe the whole phenomena, the working of Nature and of Life, said Mirza Ghalib. The scriptures, which were revelations of Truth, were all written by men who knew what they were talking about. Head-learning is just intellectual appreciation, philosophical quibbling; Soul-wisdom is really knowing in your Soul. Who have head-learning say: ‘Behold I know’. Those

that have heart-learning say in humbleness: “Thus I have heard”. The body is not thy self. Thy Self is in itself without a body, and neither praise nor blame affects it. “I am not the body, breath, mind, intellect, ego or memory – I am the ever pure consciousness whose nature is bliss; I am that innocence and benevolence”, says Shankar in *Atmashtakam*. Freedom is pure observation without direction. “Freedom is found in the choice-less awareness of our daily existence and activity”, observed JK. Perhaps real change can only come with a revolution in oneself, a letting go of all impressions, attachments and studiously-built self images. When man becomes aware of the movement of his own thoughts, he will see the division between the thinker and thought, the observer and ‘observed’, the experiencer and the experience. He will discover that this division is an illusion. A spiritual person will enjoy the walk even if he may or may not reach the destination. Human consciousness has been a marvel of creation of light. Human species embody successional and transcendental contents of evolution that is unfolding from within. *The Voice of the Silence* mentions three halls of learning we must pass through – from the Hall of ignorance through Hall of Learning to the Hall of Wisdom. Only on ‘Being Truth’ one becomes desire-less and sees without seeing, speaks without speaking, knows without knowing. He is Pure Consciousness, Bliss – Supreme Bliss in and upon which this universe appears superimposed, like a snake on a rope.

“Self is Power, that Self am I; Self is strength, that Self am I; Self is Peace, that Self am I; Self is Bliss, that Self am I; Self is Truth, that Self am I!” It is the *Atma* or Self, the expansive ‘I’ that inheres in everyone; the Supreme Consciousness that inheres in all of us.

A gardener cannot make a plant grow, but he can assist in creating conditions which facilitate growth.

**RADHA BURNIER**

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Assam

Fourteen members of Assam Theosophical Federation, led by Bro Gokul Chandra Deka, Vice-President of the Federation, attended the Annual Convention held at Adyar in December, 2014, and took the opportunity to introduce themselves to the newly elected International President Bro. Tim Boyd. They also met the International Vice-President and other senior members of the Theosophical Society. On their return, they narrated their experience and impressions in the meetings held at their Lodge and the Federation.

The thirteenth Annual General Meeting of Nalbari District Theosophical Lodge Co-ordination Committee was held on the 3 February with Bro Gokul Chandra Deka in chair. The meeting reviewed the activities of the committee during the year and chalked out an action –plan for the year 2015.

A Theosophical Lodge and a TOS Group was constituted in January last at Abhayapuri, a cultural centre to of Western Assam, with 20 members including members of the teaching community, social workers and people generally interested in spiritualism. Earlier, a group of senior members of Assam Theosophical Federation visited Abhayapuri and held discussions pertaining to formation of the Lodge and the T. O. S. Group.

Two prominent senior members, namely, Bro. Koseswar Bora (Diploma No. 81893) and Bro. Satyabrata Lakhar (Diploma No. 81415) passed to peace on 20 and 24 January respectively. Bro. Bora was President of Kahilipara Lodge and Bro. Lakhar was the Founder Secretary of Rehabari Lodge. The members paid their warm tributes to the departed souls in a meeting organized to remember their contributions.

### Marathi

The Foundation Day of the TS was observed by the members of Poona Lodge on 17 November, 2014. Bro. S.D. Burse, President of the Lodge, made some introductory comments and then Bro. M.B. Naidu spoke about Madame Blavatsky, the co-founder of TS. Bro. Nitin

Abhyankar gave some useful information about Col. H.S. Olcott, the first International President.

Bro. S.D. Burse conducted the study of 'Death and After' by Annie Besant. It was held at Poona Lodge on four Sundays in November and on the first and second Sunday in December. Bro. S.H. Vaidya conducted the 'Theosophy- Science Meet' on 23 November and 21 December respectively.

Echo Convention was conducted at Poona Lodge on 28 December. It was chaired by Bro. S.H. Vaidya and he presented the gist of the Inaugural Address delivered by the International President Bro. Tim Boyd. Sis. Sumana Kale and Bro. S.H. Rairikar spoke on this occasion.

Hindu Congregational Pooja is performed at the Poona Lodge on every Sunday at 9.30 a.m. This is followed by prayer of a religion, recital of "OM" & Healing Ritual. During the period under review, Pooja was performed by Bro. Kaustubh Bhadabhade, Sis. Sumati Kulkarni and Bro. Dushyant Vaidya. The recital of *Om* was guided by Bro. M.A. Daftardar, Bro. Bharat Srivastava. Healing Ritual was conducted by Bro. Rajesh Raste, Bro. Kalbhande, Bro. S.D. Burse and Sis. Varsha Motwani.

On December 4, an elocution competition was organized by TOS Pune Group at Bahuli, a village 28 kms away from Pune. The purpose of organizing the programme was to develop skill and to inculcate principles of Theosophy among students and teachers. Seventeen Primary Schools from remote areas participated in the event. 118 students expressed their views on various subjects which were given in government school syllabus. Some of them spoke in english. The members of TOS Bro. Rairikar, Bro. Jadhav, Bro. Sharma and other two invitees judged the caliber of the students. Bro. Rajpal Sharma spoke in brief about Theosophy during the prize distribution ceremony. Bro. Rairikar spoke on patriotism. The participants were given certificates and the meritorious students were given trophies and medals. Advocate Sanjay Potey thanked the audience.

### Uttar Pradesh

A group discussion on *Vairagya* was held at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, on 3 December, 2014. The members who shared their views

on the subject were Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Bro. B.L. Dubey, Bro. U.S. Pandey and Smt. Vasumati Agrihotri respectively. The other activities held at the Lodge in December 2014 and January 2015 were the talks on 'Yama & Niyama: The Foundation of Yoga' by Bro. U.S. Pandey, 'Theosophy in daily life' by Bro. Rajesh Gupta and 'Practical Theosophy' by Bro. M.C. Pandey. Bro. B.B. Lal delivered talks on 'Ishwara' and 'Life and Philosophy of Socrates' respectively.

Bro. R.L. Gupta's talk on 'Universal Brotherhood' was held at Chohan Lodge, Kanpur, on 3 December, 2014. Besides, Bro. S.S. Gautam's two talks on 'The Voice of the Silence' and Bro. S.K. Pandey's talk on 'At the Feet of the Master' were held at the same venue in December.

Nirvana Lodge, Agra, organized the following talks in December: 'Tendencies & Mentality', 'No Liberator outside Self' and 'The Voice of the Silence'. These talks were delivered by Bro. Brijesh Rajput, Bro. Shyam Kumar Sharma and Bro. Qamar Iqbal respectively.

Bro. U.S. Pandey, Federation Secretary of U.P., delivered a talk on "Struggle in human life and Theosophy" in a meeting of Hyderabad Lodge held on 27 January, 2015. Earlier Bro. Shiv Prasad of Hyderabad Lodge introduced the speaker. The talk was followed by interaction with the participants. Bro. A. M. Vatcha presided over the meeting.

A meeting on 'Theosophy' was organized by Brahma Vidya Lodge at Orai on 31 January and 1-2 February, 2015. Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered talk on the first day on "Mahatmas and their letters" and on second day on 'Meditation in the light of Theosophy'.

About 50 members from various lodges of U.P. Federation participated in the 139th International Convention held in December, 2014 at Adyar.

Four members of the Federation participated in the programme of the School of the Wisdom organized at Adyar from 05 to 16 January, 2015.

NOIDA Lodge organized the study of the book *An Outline of Theosophy* on 31 January, 2015. Bro. J.K. Khanna, the Lodge Secretary coordinated the study with active participation of 14 other members.

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Tapasya Lodge Gangaghat (Shuklaganj) organized a seminar on 14 December, 2014, on the theme "Reality of Fate" in which about 35 persons including members of Tapasya Lodge and Chohan Lodge, Kanpur, and also 22 school going children participated. The Lodge organized another seminar on 11 January, 2015, on 'Theosophy in daily life' in which 45 persons including members of Tapasya and Chohan Lodge participated. In both the seminars Bro. S.S. Gautam and Bro. S.K. Pandey were the main speakers. Other members like Km. Preeti Tewari and Bro. Kirtiman Singh also expressed their views. There was active interaction with the participants.

Lucknow- Satyamarg Lodge organized a public talk on 26.1.15 on "Avatara". Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Secretary of Pragya Lodge, was the speaker.

Kashi Tattva Sabha of Varanasi organized a meeting on 30 January in which Bro. V. Narayanan, Bro. P.S. Panchakshari and Bro. S. Sundaram gave their impressions regarding the 139th International Theosophical Convention held at Adyar in the last week of December, 2014. Bro. Vashishtha Muni Ojha spoke on *Swachhata-ek Sambhavana* (Cleanliness: a possibility) in the public lecture organized by KTS on 6 February. The subject of the talk delivered by Bro. U.S. Pandey on 20 February was *Manav Jeevan: Sangharsh Ya Ananda* (Human Life: Struggle or Bliss).

Shri Prem Mohan Das (Dip. 55357) of Gorakhpur Lodge passed to peace on 29 November 2014.

### **Indian Section Convention**

The 123rd Indian Section Convention-I was held at Adyar on 27 December, 2014. Inaugurating the convention the International President, Bro. Tim Boyd, said :

Often I find myself in the presence of Theosophical Society members who have parents, grandparents, even great grandparents who were members of the TS. I am a first generation member of the TS. What this has meant for me is that although I was raised by high minded and loving parents, I did not have the good fortune to come in contact with the teachings as a

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child. It also means that I had to do the work to discover Theosophy on my own, to experiment with its teachings, and then to shape my life as an expression of the truths I found. If we are honest, there can be no such thing as a second, third, or fifth generation Theosophist. Regardless of parentage a genuine Theosophist is that one who shines with the light of Truth.

The Federation Secretaries conveyed greeting on behalf of their respective Federations.

The General Secretary presented the Annual Report for the year 2013-2014 giving the general survey of the work done during the year under review. It was followed by the Treasurer's Report presented by Bro. P.S. Panchakshari.

Bro. Chittaranjan Satapathy, International Vice-President, chaired the Convention and in his Presidential remarks he analysed the existing situation.

The Indian Section Convention-II was held on 29 December, 2014, in which short talks were delivered on 'Knowing and Being' by Bro. S.S. Gautam of Kanpur (U.P. Federation), Ms. K.M. Vanishree of Korategere (Karnataka Federation) and Bro. Sahadeb Patro of Cuttack (Utkal Federation). Bro. P.K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, presided over this session.

### Indian Section Headquarters

A meeting to observe Adyar Day was held at the Indian Section HQ in which the General Secretary and Dr. Abha Srivastav, President of Kashi Tattva Sabha, spoke on the significance of the day which inspires one to understandingly learn to promote the cause and work of the TS.

## BHOWALI STUDY CAMP, SUMMER 2015

The Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, Varanasi, Study Camps' Programme for Summer 2015 at Himalayan Study Centre, Bhowali, (Uttarakhand) -

I 21st to 30th April 2015 (+ 1 day prior +1 day after)	Rs. 3600/-	Proposed to be conducted by Karnataka Federation
II 11th May to 16th May 2015 (+ 1 day prior +1 day after)	Rs. 2800/-	Proposed to be conducted by Prof. C.A. Shinde for Marathi Federation
III 17 <sup>th</sup> to 19 May 2015 (+ 1 day prior +1 day after)	Rs. 1700/-	ES Retreat to be conducted by Sri P.K. Jayaswal
IV 21st to 24th May 2015 (+ 1 day prior +1 day after)	Rs. 2000/-	Study of <b>Way of Disciple</b> to be held under the auspices of the Indian Section. The study will be directed by Sri P.K. Jayaswal
V 30th May & 31st 2015 (+ 1 day prior +1 day after)	Rs. 400/-	Camp for Uttarakhand Region

Accommodation for each camp will be for 32 persons. Lodge/Federation sponsoring must recommend names of the participants. Cancellation will be permitted 7 days prior to study camp. Nominal Rs. 100/- will be deducted and balance amount will be refunded.

The theme of study camp etc will be announced by each Federation..

Non – members will be charged Rs. 200/- per person, per day: subject to availability of accommodation.

Remittances are to be made into Vijaya Bank, Kamachha, Varanasi A/c No. 718301010005045 IFSC Code VIJB0007183 written in the name of the Indian Section, The Theosophical Society. Remittance details to be intimated to the Indian Section.

Registration 20 days before each camp and cancellation 7days before commencement of each camp.

S. Sundaram  
General Secretary

M.P. & Rajasthan and U.P. Federation are jointly organizing a study camp on 11-12 April at Gwalior. The theme is 'Basic Teachings of Theosophy'. The book titled "Ageless Wisdom of Life" by Clara M. Codd will form the basis for study which will be conducted in Hindi. Members are welcome to participate. The intending participants may inform their names and date of arrival by 20 March, 2015 to any of the following:

1. Dr. H.S. Dwivedi, Secretary, M.P. & Rajasthan Federation. Mobile No. 09425119409

2. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary, U.P. Federation, Mobile No. 09451993170. Each participant will be required to pay Rs. 300/- on arrival at Gwalior. Board/Lodging will be provided from evening of 10<sup>th</sup> April to afternoon of 12 April, 2015 by Gwalior Lodge.

## **RECENT RELEASE**

### **THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES TO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS – 1980-2013**

*Radha Burnier*

A collection of inspiring themes and messages given by Mrs Radha Burnier on the occasion of the annual international Conventions during her presidency of The Theosophical Society from 1980 to 2013. They provide sound guidance to give one's best to the Society that it may better serve the world.

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## **FORTHCOMING**

### **ESOTERIC INSTRUCTIONS BY H. P. BLAVATSKY**

*compiled by Michael Gomes*

A compilation of instructions given by Mme Blavatsky for students of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society based on the 1891 edition. With an introduction including a detailed background of the history of the Instructions and also added footnotes.

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The Indian Section Website now has been regularly updated by the Asst. Gen Secy. The name of website is -- 'WWW.THEOSOPHY-INDIA.ORG'. There are numerous col. available for each Federation which can fill up by sending information on 'STUDY CLASS, WORKSHOP, CONFERENCE SEMINARS AND SYMPOSIUM' at different places going to be held under each Federation. Further the Federation can update it by sending their copy of Journals, Magazines and monthly bulletins so also the photographs of the functions directly to the email of Asst. Gen. Secretary i.e. < ags.theosophyvn@gmail.com > by which the website will be immediately updated.