

# *TheoSophia*

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*Our Work for the  
21st Century*

**Why Hasn't Humanity  
Grown Up?**

*A Theosophical Perspective  
on Pandemics*

**IMAGINING A NEW WORLD**

**THE PILGRIM'S  
JOURNEY**

# TheoSophia



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

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Contributions are welcome. Articles will be considered if up to 1,500 words, and sent as an email attachment to the editor. Note that *TheoSophia* articles will also be used in part or whole on the website: [www.theosophy.nz](http://www.theosophy.nz)

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## THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Our Mission is to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the Unity of Life.

*July 2018 Naarden meeting of the TS*



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*Pink Flowers*  
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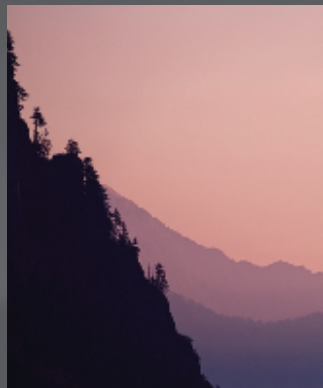
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# Coronavirus Letter

... from **Tim Boyd**, International President  
of the Theosophical Society.

Thursday, March 19, 2020

Dear Friends

As the world passes through this trying moment, I want to share a few words about Adyar and our response to the Coronavirus.

Thankfully, at this point we have no known cases of infection with our residents or staff. However, we are keenly aware that although the numbers have not yet spiked in India, in all likelihood they soon will. In order to do our part to limit the transmission of the virus we have taken a number of measures:

- We have suspended all meetings of TS and allied groups at our campus.
- We have suspended the hours during which the campus is open for local visitors.
- We have closed the Social Welfare Centre (SWC) until further notice.
- We have closed the Vocational Training Centre (VTC) until further notice.
- We will also be suspending all major project activities in the campus shortly.
- For the time being we will not be providing accommodations for visitors to Adyar.
- In accordance with government actions, the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School (OMHSS) and the Adyar Theosophical Academy (ATA) are closed until further notice.
- Our clinic on campus will continue to monitor and provide care at no cost for staff and residents.
- Any employees who are found to have the virus will receive paid leave during their recovery.

This is an unprecedented moment in human history, one for which there is no script or previous example. From moment to moment we will navigate our way through. This will end. And when it does we will also navigate our way through the uncharted waters into which this virus is leading us. We can be sure that it will be a different world on the other side of this pandemic.

In the confusion, uncertainty and anxiety of this moment one thing is certain. We are all in this together. Our interconnection, interdependence, in a word, our Oneness, has moved beyond the realm of Theosophical speculation to become an undeniable fact. Although many feel paralyzed by the enormity of the situation, this is a time of great opportunity for anyone who sincerely embraces the teachings and the life. Who we are speaks so loudly people cannot hear a word we are saying. The possibility of peace in the face of fear needs demonstration. Our continued cultivation of a centre of peace within, and the conscious radiating of that peace into our shared mental and emotional stream, though unseen, has an enormous effect. Whether we find ourselves in isolation, or in the midst of the turmoil there is a work for us to do. One for which we have prepared.

I close with the words of Martin Luther King Jr:

The ultimate measure of a man is not where they stand in moments of comfort  
and convenience, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy.

May we all find the inner reserves to meet the present and coming challenge – together.

Wishing you all the best

Tim

<https://theosophy.nz/>



# Out of lockdown and ready... *To Be A Pilgrim*

*The Pilgrim's Journey*, theme of this issue of *TheoSophia*, is a journey requiring courage and determination, qualities appreciated recently through the COVID-19 pandemic. The pilgrim has, wrote John Bunyan in 1678, an "avowed [spiritual] intent" but must also have, in my view, keen perception and a sense of direction – unerringly toward "true divine enlightenment" as spoken of by Theosophy founder, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) cited by Richard Sell (p.12).

Writing on related topics are John Vorstermans on pilgrimage (p.4), Vicente Hao Chin Jr, the work of the TS (p.6), Betty Bland, the joy of life (p.18) and Tim Wyatt, a new world (p.24). Warwick Keys has reviewed an exceptional book on the remarkable HPB (p.27) while John Algeo has left us a videoed course on pilgrimage, accessible at <http://theosophy.nz/> (see p.11)

Tim Boyd has a letter for us relating to the COVID-19 pandemic (p.2) and Barry Bowden a theosophical perspective on pandemics (p.20).

*TSNZ Convention 2021* is to be held in Wellington. Register early to gain a discount. For information see page 16.

May your post-lockdown life go well and (apologies to Bunyan) "May no discouragement make you once relent ... an avowed intent to be a pilgrim."

Pamela Zane Keys  
Editor

## EVOLVING

Evolving  
we keep on  
resolving  
and unfolding  
Destiny

Lorraine Alston

### DIARY DATES

#### 2020

29-30	Aug.	Presidents' Forum
30	Sep.	Close of nominations for the Governance Board
3-4	Oct.	Immersion Weekend

#### 2021

7-12	Jan	TSNZ Convention in Wellington
8	Jan	AGM of The Theosophical Society in NZ Inc.

Check for updates and details of these events: [www.theosophy.nz](http://www.theosophy.nz)

### FUTURE ISSUES

Date	Theme	Deadline
2020		
December	<i>Theosophy in Action</i>	1 October
2021		
March	<i>Soul and Spirit</i>	1 January
June	<i>Invocation and Prayer</i>	1 April

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New Zealand's National President of the Theosophical Society, **John Vorstermans**, invites us to recognise and reflect on...

## The Pilgrim's Journey

The pilgrim in Christian literature is generally considered someone who undertakes a pilgrimage to a holy place or shrine. An example of a pilgrimage trail is the Comino de Santiago, also known as the Way of Saint James, which ends at the shrine of the apostle Saint James the Great in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, north-west Spain. There are many such trails world-wide, such as:

- Kiman Koda, in Japan, is a series of trails across Japan's Kii Peninsula mountains, all ending at Kumano, a sacred Shinto site, home to the Kumano Sanzan Shrines.
- La Via Francigena in England, France and Italy. One of the most popular pilgrimage routes in the Middle Ages, going back to at least the seventh century C.E. While it is not the most popular of ancient pilgrimage routes now, the Via Francigena gets upwards of 1,000 visitors per year.
- The Pilgrims' Way in England starts in Winchester and cuts across southern England, ending in Canterbury at the Shrine of Thomas Becket.
- Mecca – Saudi Arabia. To Muslims, the Pilgrimage to Mecca (Haji) is a duty. No matter where in the world you begin, you end at the Masjid al-Haram mosque (the largest mosque on the planet). Within this mosque lies the Kaaba, the cube-like building which Muslims all over the world turn to face when they pray.
- Char Dham in India is one of the most important Hindu sites in the world. Many make the trip to Char Dham at least once in their lives. Char Dam refers to four different pilgrimage sites in Northern India, at the foot of the Himalayas. Travellers usually visit each one of these sites, moving from east to west from Yamunotri, to Gangotri, to Kedarnath and finally to Uttaranchal.

These are just a few ancient pilgrim trails which describe a journey to fulfil a sacred purpose. The pilgrim may visit a holy shrine to come closer to that which they seek, be uplifted or come closer to the presence of the Divine.

*The Pilgrimage*, the first book written by Paulo Coelho, recounts the spectacular trials of Paulo Coelho on a journey across the Comino de Santiago in search of a sword which he would find in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela at the end of the trail. This account explores a more esoteric or mystical perspective of pilgrimage as it examines the need to find one's path. Along the journey, Paulo is beset by one challenge after another that slow and frustrate him in reaching the sword, his goal. Eventually, he has the realisation that it is the challenges we meet in everyday life that are to teach us if we listen or open our awareness to them. Paulo eventually learns the importance of being present to the learning of every moment and recognises that the destination (the sword) is simply a distraction. The story is a metaphor to show us that it is what happens on the journey that is so important, not the destination.

Pilgrimage stories capture our attention and speak to something deep within us. They are usually allegorical stories which hold valuable clues to our spiritual re-awakening. For example, *The Prodigal Son*, a Biblical story of two sons (Luke 15:11) who each represent an aspect of the Soul or consciousness. One is the Monad and the other the mind. The son who stayed home is the religious or moral son, the Monad; the son who went into the far off country is the human incarnation of the Soul, enjoying all the pleasures of the senses and passions, the mind. Going into a 'far country' is separating the consciousness from its parent source. The goal is being able to return to the Father's house, a mark that we have spiritually re-awakened to who we are.

*The Pilgrim and the Path: Living Theosophy.*<sup>1</sup> This study course by John Algeo explores the idea that we are all pilgrims, implying that we are on a journey to a particular place. If we decide that we are indeed pilgrims and start to look for the path that will take

us to the goal of our pilgrimage, we must have some idea of why we are travelling and where we are going. To begin a process of self-unfoldment, we must have a sense of what is to be unfolded. It sets the basis for discovery of who or what we truly are which comes alive when we open awareness or observation of ourselves and what is happening around us.

The pilgrim is not the personality, the various actors in the play, but rather it is the Ego or Soul that is the learner that grows from the experiences of the players. The actors learn within the context of their understanding, filtered through memories and the conditions of the life they find themselves in. Emily Sellon, a prominent American Theosophist, wrote regarding some of the Fundamentals of Theosophy<sup>ii</sup>:

Humanity, being a microcosm of the universe, embodies all its elements and principles; for the individual self or spiritual consciousness, the law of periodicity creates the 'cycle of necessity' – the pilgrimage of every self through the worlds of form according to the cyclic process of involution and evolution.

This cyclic process is accomplished through the force, and according to the laws, of action or Karma; it is a process that is self-determined and constitutes the basis of freedom within a universe of intelligent order.

The human Pilgrimage takes us from our source in the One through our experience of the many – the multiplicity of separate lives or moments of existence, and the uniqueness of individual being – back to union with the One Divine Source. Our goal is thus to complete the cosmic cycle of manifestation in full conscious realisation of our Self, no longer as polarised between spirit and matter, self and other, but as both all and one with the Source of all. This realisation is known as Enlightenment.

H.P. Blavatsky spoke of the Pilgrimage in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine* in which she lists the *Third Fundamental Proposition* to keep in mind when searching for the truth:

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory Pilgrimage for every Soul – a spark of the former – through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term... The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

To conclude, there are several points that are important to understand when exploring the *Pilgrimage of the Soul*:

1. *The obligatory Pilgrimage* for every Soul refers to the fact that

every Divine Being will undertake this Pilgrimage at some stage of evolution. As part of this process, the Soul loses awareness of truth and through the development of Mind Principle, re-awakens.

- Every step taken is filtered through past actions or Karma, a complicated philosophy to understand. In brief, we create what we are by our actions, thoughts and emotions. We are unable to see or understand who we are as this Karma acts as a metaphoric veil which hides our most inner SELF, preventing the perception of reality or truth and causing struggle and swinging between apparent pain and pleasure. This veil must be 'rent asunder' if we are to find our way home.
- Our Soul has to pass through every stage of manifestation: mineral, plant, animal, human and beyond over long periods of evolution. The essence of the understanding and qualities we gain through this process make up an integral part of our nature and form the instinct and our 'animal desires'.
- Up to the Human cycle, progress is slow, made through natural impulse. That Divine Impulse that is within us drives us on. However, once the Human stage is reached, progress can only be made *by self-induced and self-devised efforts*. In other words, for us to make progress we have to do it ourselves, we have to create our own Path, as Krishnamurti often said.
- No one is treated any differently from anyone else. If we want to have a future life where we have certain qualities, then we need to start developing them now. Otherwise, WE will never have them. However, be cautious of what you desire or work on, as the result may not always be what you expect.

i <https://theosophy.nz/courses/the-pilgrim-and-the-path-living-theosophy-john-algeo>

ii <https://theosophy.world/resource/some-fundamentals-theosophy-emily-sellon>



# Our Work for the 21st Century

International Theosophist, author and educator, **Vicente R. Hao Chin Jr** asks about our vision for the Theosophical Society...

**I**n order to look forward, it is helpful to look backward. It has been 145 years since the founding of the TS. The worldwide expansion of the Theosophical Society reached its peak in 1928 when its membership reached 45,000 with highly active and dedicated members throughout the world giving lectures, writing books, establishing schools, forming leagues for various purposes and more. After 1928, however, the Society consistently declined so that today it has just around 25,000 members, a drop of 44%. During the same period the world population has ballooned by 350% to seven billion people. Our publishing work has declined and few young people are joining the Society. Almost all our magazines are for our members but not for the public.

For the past 90 years or so, the Theosophical Society has mostly focused on solidifying its teachings – quite unsuccessfully because theosophical literature today has become divided into two main factions. Lodges and sections tend to be inward-oriented – being concerned about mainly members' activities. We have been very weak in bringing theosophy and the theosophical life to the public to help solve the problems of humanity. Are we becoming less and less relevant to the problems of the world? It is not an exaggeration to say that the past century has been a disappointing period because the Mahatmas intended the Theosophical Society to be a movement for the entire world, not just for a few thousand members. We need to be reminded of the exhortation of the Mahachohan:

For our doctrines to practically react on the so-called moral code or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., we have to preach and popularise a knowledge of theosophy. It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining oneself Nirvana ... which is, after all, only an exalted and glorious selfishness, but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true Theosophist.

*Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, Chron. Ed., Appendix II*

We are now in the first quarter of the 21st century. What work direction should we focus on in order to arrest our decline and make the Society a vibrant movement that will have an impact on civilisation and world thought? There are many such directions that can be identified, and the General Council has listed about 40 of them. For now, allow me to focus on five areas that I think are important:

- 1) Globalise theosophical work
- 2) Programs for the public – Applied Theosophy
- 3) Establish theosophical schools
- 4) Draw young people to Theosophy
- 5) Work towards religious reform.

## 1) GLOBALISE THEOSOPHICAL WORK

For a century or more, theosophical countries have tended to work like separate islands of an archipelago. They are so absorbed with their own internal problems and goals that they hardly synergise as a global family. No section is strong if the global TS is weak. Many sections have died or are dying without being helped or saved by either international headquarters or other sections. China, Hong Kong and Korea have

We need to remind ourselves: Ideas are not powerful unless translated into practices that can transform.

disappeared from the theosophical map. Had we supported our lodge in Hong Kong 30 or so years ago and kept it dynamic, it would have been our gateway to reviving the Theosophical Society in China, the land where one-quarter of the world lives. Sri Lanka is just a stone's throw away from Adyar. It used to be one of the strongest sections in the world, having more than 200 schools established by the Theosophical Society since the time of Henry Steel Olcott, our president. Olcott himself is officially considered a national hero of that country. And yet today only one lodge remains in that former bastion of theosophical philosophy and is now gasping and trying to survive. We need to make theosophical work a unified global mission. One for all and all for one. To build this, there are three strategic directions that need to be attended to:

#### *Annual International Strategic Planning and Review*

This aspect of work has been started under our current President where he involved many members of the General Council. We hope that it will be sustained permanently as part of our global work. We have limited manpower and resources and we need to identify and review what would be our work priorities that will create optimum impact upon individual and social transformation. The strategic planning group becomes in effect a high level think tank of the TS, composed of leaders who are in touch with what is happening to the entire theosophical world. This previously untapped group effectively expands the number of volunteers who are helping the international officers perform their global work – not just limited to the staff in Adyar. Because they are active leaders of the various TS countries, there is a high level of synergy that makes possible many things that cannot be done by any single section. This group that plans, implements and reviews our priority projects will make a pivotal difference in the future of the TS.

#### *Through Projects, Increase Budget for International Work*

In 2017, the budget of the Theosophical Society for “Propagation of Theosophy” including the offices of the international officers was only four million rupees or about US\$58,000. This is dismally tiny for a global organisation in 55 or 60 countries. But, we often hear it said, “We don't have the money” to increase this budget. This is not true. It is not the money that we lack. We lack worthwhile projects or programs. We need to remember that *it is money that follows projects* and not the other way around. In other words, if there are worthwhile projects launched, then money will come. If we have the money and have no projects, then the fund will just dry up. Let us take a few examples that will demonstrate this principle:

- In 1993, a small school in Bhubaneswar, India, for tribal children was set up with 125 students. It was a free school and survived only by the generosity of donors. Because it was seen as something worthwhile and noble, the school grew with increasing donations coming from various sources. Today, after 25 years, it has grown to become a huge institution with 26,000 students, all staying in free dormitories, with free meals and tuition. The school serves 100,000 meals every day. This is the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, with a current annual budget of 760 million rupees (US\$11 million), all coming from donations.
- In 1922, a group of Freemasons in Louisiana, USA, decided to put up a hospital for crippled and burnt children. For 40 years, it persisted in this thankless work to serve those unfortunate children. In 1962, the work had grown such that three more hospitals were put up. Today, it has 22 hospitals in various parts of the United States. This is the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled and Burnt Children, with an annual budget of US\$500 million, all coming from donations or earnings from donated endowment funds.
- In 1865, ten years before the Theosophical Society was founded, a Protestant minister and his wife decided to preach to those of very low social status in east London, such as prostitutes, beggars, alcoholics by helping uplift them in various ways. Their persistence despite hardships attracted the attention of many people who started volunteering for this mission, and donations in larger and larger amounts started to pour in. This became the Salvation Army, thriving by volunteers and donations. How much is the current annual budget? It is US\$3.7 billion per year. Every year.

We are not trying to compare ourselves with other organisations. It is not even about the amount of money that these organisations are able to raise. It is about *possibilities*. These organisations started small or with almost no money. But they had worthwhile projects. Money just came in because people who had the money identified with the worthy projects. This year, the President and the General Council have identified international priority projects. These should be sustained and promoted. If they are worthy, then the budget of the TS will just naturally grow. There will be volunteers who will come forward. At the same time, it is important that there is a permanent team of coordinators who follow up on these initiatives as well as offers to volunteer.

### *Systematically train dedicated and competent theosophical workers*

The TS in America has a program of training people, especially young ones, to become potential workers, speakers and leaders of the Society. This is not just a one-time training session but a program that is sustained year after year. It is proposed that Adyar should set up a similar training program for young theosophists who are willing to work for the cause of the great teachers of humanity. Different sections can make nominations from among their members. A curriculum can be designed, supported with adequate materials, methodology and the opportunity to have internship or practicum. In the future, our own theosophical colleges can offer a Master's degree in Theosophy as a formal way to train workers, speakers, authors and leaders. It should be run not like an academic institution but more like an ashram – a seedbed for leaders who live the theosophical life. We must be careful, however, that such a formal training does not nurture dogmatic speakers and writers who will make theosophy look like another set of religious beliefs. H. P. Blavatsky, in nurturing future successors, warned:

I do not refer to technical knowledge of the esoteric doctrine, though that is most important; I spoke rather of the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiased and clear judgment. Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart.

*Key to Theosophy*

## 2) PROGRAMS FOR THE PUBLIC – APPLIED THEOSOPHY

The TS must offer programs that will benefit the general public: men, women, children, parents, teachers, public servants, professionals – not just its members. We need to remind ourselves: Ideas are not powerful unless translated into practices that can transform. It is the application of philosophies or ideas as solutions to human and social problems. This is the mission of the TS. As the Mahachohan said:

To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem ... and if our doctrines will show their competence to offer it, then the world will be the first one to confess that must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives truth and nothing but the truth.

*Mahatma Letters, Appendix II*

*Who will demonstrate that theosophical ideas can be transformative?* Theosophists, of course. Setting up long-term programs that have an impact on people and society can be difficult but it is the only way to make ideas transformative. What are examples of such public programs?

### *The Theosophical Order of Service*

This is perhaps the most important existing avenue for applied theosophy for the public. The Mahatma K.H. wrote (italics added):

*The first object of the T.S. is philanthropy. The true Theosophist is a philanthropist – 'not for himself but for the world he lives.'* This, and philosophy, the right comprehension of life and its mysteries, will give the 'necessary basis' and show the right path to pursue.

*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom, Series I, No. 45*

...Our Society is not a mere intellectual school for occultism, and those greater than we have said that he who thinks the task of *working for others* too hard had better not undertake it. *The moral and spiritual sufferings of the world are more important* and need help and cure more than science needs aid from us in any field of discovery. 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' (Ibid., No. 46)

The Mahachohan asks:

Shall we not devote ourselves to teaching a few Europeans... *and leave the teeming millions of the ignorant, of*

*the poor and despised, the lowly and the oppressed, to take care of themselves and of their hereafter as best they know how? Never. Rather perish the T.S. with both its hapless founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism... That we the devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self-sacrifice, of philanthropy, divine kindness ... should ever allow the T.S. to represent the embodiment of selfishness, the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea, my brothers.*

*Mahatma Letters, Appendix II*

It is clear: our work is to benefit the “teeming millions” who may not be interested in high philosophy or esotericism. However, TOS work is not just about food, medical attention or relief. It is ultimately about human development – dignity, self-esteem, selfless service, moral development, social harmony, peace, for example. Like the TS, the TOS needs to synergise the different efforts so that there will be greater impact on a worldwide scale. There can be one or two or three common advocacies across nations that can help change global opinion, attitude or policies on a certain matter. Examples are women’s welfare, vegetarianism, animal welfare, education, literacy, character building and parenting.

#### **Meditation for the Public**

Another work to benefit the public is by popularising meditational practice. It is universally acknowledged that meditation is a transformative practice that can change individuals and societies. There are many movements that have done exemplary work along these lines, such as the promotion of Zen meditation, Vipassana meditation, mindfulness and Transcendental Meditation. The Theosophical Society should be similarly engaged since meditation not only brings about personal integration and equanimity in individuals but it is also an essential foundation of the spiritual life. Let us choose one or two classic meditation approaches that the Society can popularise through the thousands of lodges around the world. This has been chosen as one of the priority projects of the General Council and we hope that this will soon become a common feature of our lodge work.

#### **Self-Transformation Seminars**

The Self-Transformation Seminar has been conducted in 20 countries in the world and has been effectively used by TS sections and lodges for their work for the public. Many outside organisations have requested it – schools and universities, non-government organisations, religious groups, government units, civic associations and even the military. It has been offered as a foundational training for the spiritual life. The Seminar can thus be used as an offering of TS Sections and Lodges to help benefit

individuals, organisations and institutions for personal and social transformation. Facilitators have been trained in ten countries. Systematic training can be done more widely.

#### **Public Magazines on Applied Theosophy**

Today there are very few theosophical magazines that are intended for public circulation. Among these are *Sofia*, *Theosophical Digest*, *Quest*, *Peace Ideas*, *Wake Up India* and *Researches Relevant to Theosophy*. They need to be multiplied because they are essential to bring applied theosophy to the public mind, otherwise we are just trying to convince the converted. It is proposed that more and more public magazines, whether printed or digital, should be issued in as many languages as possible around the world. Here, synergy is again essential. Sections do not have to invest much editorial time and effort to start such a magazine. They just need to translate or reprint good articles from existing public theosophical magazines and then put them out regularly.

### **3) ESTABLISH THEOSOPHICAL SCHOOLS**

The key to the future lies in our children and youth. When they change, the world changes. The most powerful institution that can influence the young is school. It can be more powerful than parenting and media because it can reverse parental miseducation and harmful values of television, internet, print media and movies. If we want Theosophy to have an enduring influence, we must establish schools as well as influence the world’s educational systems. At present, there is a renewed interest in starting schools in various countries, particularly The Philippines, India, Argentina and Brazil. H. P. Blavatsky stressed the importance of this work:

*If we had money, we would found schools ... Children should above all be taught self-reliance, love for all men, altruism, mutual charity, and more than anything else, to think and reason for themselves. ... We would endeavour to deal with each child as a unit, and to educate it so as to produce the most harmonious and equal unfoldment of its powers, in order that its special aptitudes should find their full natural development. We should aim at creating free men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, unselfish. And we believe that much if not all of this could be obtained by proper and truly theosophical education.*

*Key to Theosophy, Sec. 13*

The world has changed and traditional dissemination approaches are not reaching young people effectively.

#### 4) DRAW YOUNG PEOPLE TO THEOSOPHY

In my travels to many theosophical countries, I have observed a common pattern among many lodges – the average age of theosophical members is disturbingly high. In one recent lecture tour, I observed that the average age of the audience attending was about 65 years old, with no attendee younger than 40. Many lodge leaders have bewailed the absence of young people in their midst. Some are closing down activities or selling part of their properties because they do not foresee successors who will take their places. How can we expand theosophical work when we are shrinking our lodges or sections?

The world has changed and traditional dissemination approaches are not reaching young people effectively. Many elders do not know how to use computers, browse the internet, create Facebook accounts, send emails or use Whatsapp or Twitter. The language of classic books is no longer appealing to the modern generation. We need to create new approaches to dissemination, and young people understand this better than elders do. Part of the problem is the tendency of the oldies not to give wider rein to younger members to do their bit or do things in their own way. As a result, the youth shy away from theosophical gatherings because they get bored. They find the meetings irrelevant or the atmosphere too restrictive.

#### 5) WORK TOWARDS RELIGIOUS REFORMS

History has shown us the harm that popular religion has brought to the world – inquisitions, wars, terrorism, genocide, intolerance, mutual hatred, for example. The longest war in history was the Crusades between Christians and Muslims. One of the cruellest institutions was the Inquisition, when religious leaders permitted horrific torture in dealing with suspected heretics. The worst form of violence today is extremist religious terrorism – the indiscriminate killing of men, women and children regardless of nationality, race or religion. The Mahatma K.H. had strongly pointed out that two-thirds of the evils of the world come from religion, and only one-third come from human selfishness. Belief in anthropomorphic gods has made people slaves to sacerdotal authority. He wrote:

Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake, and to walk in life relying

on himself instead of leaning on a theological crutch, that for countless ages was the direct cause of nearly all human misery.

*Mahatma Letters, Letter 88*

The Mahachohan and the Mahatma K.H. declared that:

The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner-stone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity.

*Mahatma Letters, Appendix II*

This work must not be forgotten. We need to point out religious superstitions, incongruences, contradictions and conflicts with common sense and our sense of ethics. This inward moral sense must be an important foundation of future religions, rather than ‘revealed’ dogmas. It is important to disseminate a wider knowledge of the reality of mysticism and the mystical experience as the core of religious experience. The TS must help bring about a world where religions foster love instead of intolerance, exclusivity, hatred and violence. It must promote non-sectarian spirituality and mysticism.

To conclude, the above are five of the important work directions that we need to give primary attention to in this century. What can be our vision of what the Society can do for humanity? H. P. Blavatsky expressed her dream:

The [Theosophical] Society will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty, and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices; it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realisation of the Brotherhood of all men. If the Theosophical Society survives and lives true to its mission, to its original impulses through the next hundred years -- tell me, I say, if I go too far in asserting that earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!

*Key to Theosophy*

Are we now in such a heaven? If not, then we have a lot of work ahead of us. Let us hold our hands together and do it.



Vicente (Vic) Hao Chin Jr, acclaimed international Theosophical Society leader, speaker, educationalist and writer is past President of the TS in the Philippines as well as the TS Indo-Pacific Federation. He wrote *The Process of Self-Transformation* and compiled and edited the chronological edition of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. Vic is Editor-in-Chief of the *Theosophical Digest* and Associate Editor of the *Theosophical Encyclopedia*. He is the President of Golden Link College, a theosophical school in The Philippines which envisions the integration of self-transformation and academic learning and which he initiated and established in 2002.

# The Pilgrim and the Path

An inspiring on-line course by **John Algeo** teaches ways to better understand the pilgrim journey.

Theosophy tells us that we are pilgrims, implying that we are on a journey to a particular place. If we decide that we are indeed pilgrims and start to look for the path that will take us to the goal of our pilgrimage, we should also have some idea of why we are travelling and where we are headed. To begin a process of self-unfoldment, we had also better know what is being unfolded.

These matters are considered in the on-line lessons based on chapters from a book by I. K. Taimni, called *Self-Culture* or, in later American editions, *A Way to Self-Discovery*. Other books referred to are *The Pilgrim Self* by Robert Ellwood and *The Pilgrim and the Pilgrimage* by Emily Sellon, plus some supplementary material.

Download Free Course Files:

<https://theosophy.nz/courses/the-pilgrim-and-the-path-living-theosophy-john-algeo>



Spiritual progress on the path of our pilgrim journey can be long arriving, says Richard Sell.

## Why Hasn't Humanity Grown Up?

In the face of global conflict, economic disparity, ecological ruin, intolerance and cruelty, we could rightly despair and ask ourselves this fundamental question: Why hasn't humanity grown up? As we ponder on how long it will take our species to do so, the words of a Master of Wisdom spring to mind, 'As for human nature in general, it is the same now as it was a million of years ago: Prejudice based upon selfishness; a general unwillingness to give up an established order of things for new modes of life and thought.'<sup>1</sup> This is not an encouraging picture for us.

The fundamental reason for lack of spiritual progress is our inherent selfishness. On what is termed the *Path of Forthgoing*, self-identity and strengthening of the individual is needed. Indeed, grasping is appropriate at certain stages of evolution. Annie Besant said,

...men are surrounded on every side by objects of desire, and the use of these is to evoke the desire to possess them, to stimulate exertion, to inspire efforts, and thus to make facility, capacity, strength, intelligence, alertness, judgment, perseverance, patience and fortitude... without this, the man at this stage of evolution becomes lethargic and does not evolve.<sup>2</sup>

This begs the question: How long must this go on? To answer, we need to enquire into the nature of evolution and the application of time. In the *Book of Dzyan* we read 'The Eternity of the Pilgrim is like a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence.' As humans, we view things in terms of our short lifespan. If we take an average life as 70 years, then we expect to see measurable results and forward movement in that timeframe. When it doesn't occur, we become despondent. The universe doesn't work that way, it unfolds in its own good time.

Theosophy teaches the cyclic nature of the universe, a 'playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing.'<sup>3</sup> Within these extremely long periods of time we see humanity evolving in our solar system. Humanity is said to be evolving as a life-wave within a period (Chain) encompassing some 2,160,000,000 years in manifestation.<sup>4</sup> *The Secret Doctrine (Cosmogonesis)* tells us that our assigned task in the Chain (seven Rounds) is to reach perfected humanhood – an equivalent to an Adept, or Master of the Wisdom – that rare *effervescence of humanity*. If we are just past the middle of the Fourth Round, then we are just a little over halfway to our goal. There are eons ahead – millions and millions of years of evolution, more than enough time for humanity to progress according to Nature's selected course.

As a backdrop to this cosmic panorama is the question of good and evil. Is there such a thing as Evil holding us back? Do we put our world difficulties and that of the individual down to this primordial struggle as projected in some religious texts? H. P. Blavatsky stresses that supposed evil is a necessary twin of goodness, one cannot exist without the other.

There is no *malum in se*: only the shadow of light, without which light could have no existence, even in our perceptions. If evil disappeared, good would disappear along with it from Earth. (SD I:413)

Good and Evil are twins, the progeny of Space and Time, under the sway of Maya. Separate them, by cutting off one from the other, and they will both die. Neither exists per se, since each has to be generated and created out of the other, in order to come into being; both must be known and appreciated before becoming objects of perception, hence, in mortal mind, they must be divided. (SD II:96)<sup>5</sup>



In the *Mahatma Letters*, Master Koot Hoomi said that evil has no existence per se. It is the absence of good, and it is perceived as evil only by its victims. Nature in itself is neither good nor evil. It follows only immutable laws, the blind laws of necessity, and hence is not evil. 'Real evil proceeds from human intelligence and its origin rests entirely with reasoning man who dissociates himself from Nature. Humanity, then, alone is the true source of evil.'<sup>5</sup>

Civilisations too, rise and fall based on their own collective merit. If the direction taken is in tune with evolution they flourish; we see the arts and literature bloom. Societal and political openness is prevalent and tolerance is a byword. Where they are absent, and powerful figures are bent on control of populations and thought, we descend into darkness. A continuation of this course will see its destruction, as befell the mighty Atlantis. This much is assured by Karmic Law.

As we ponder on the duration of civilisations and an individual's time at hand to bring about illumination, awareness that large tracts of time are necessary to bring this about is helpful in our deliberations. In the *Mahatma Letter to A. O. Hume*,<sup>6</sup> Master Koot Hoomi says of the time we spend on earth there is

...not much to divide over some millions of years that man passes on one planet. Let us take but one million of years – suspected and now accepted by your science – to represent man's entire term upon our earth in this Round; and allowing an average of a century for each life, we find that whereas he has passed in all his lives upon our planet (on this Round) but 77,700 years he has been in the subjective spheres 922,300 years ... But what is such a petty stretch of time in comparison with even one million of the several millions of years embraced in man's occupancy of earth in a single round.<sup>6</sup>

Madame Blavatsky wrote that so-called 'evil will ever predominate unto the day when Humanity is redeemed by the true divine Enlightenment which gives the correct perception of things.'<sup>7</sup> Therefore, to move from a state of unknowing to a state of knowing is a pivotal task of each one of us. Geoffrey Hodson tells us in *Sharing the Light* that

...the successful student of Theosophy passes through successive phases of discovery, examination, test by reason, application to life and investigation by direct observation, into full experience of the teachings. This last phase – direct personal observation – is the most prized, and students of Theosophy ... are ever advised to seek that inner perception, that individual experience and comprehension by which alone Truth may be known.

This process of 'knowing' of course applies to all human beings.

From the unreal lead me to the Real.      From darkness lead me to Light.  
From death lead me to Immortality.<sup>8</sup>

The journey from darkness to light is the *Path of Return*. Desire on the *Path of Forthgoing* becomes Will on the *Path of Return*. Co-operation is a key characteristic. Those faculties

Do we put our world difficulties and that of the individual down to this primordial struggle as projected in some religious texts?



## ... to move from a state of unknowing to a state of knowing is a pivotal task of each one of us.

now developed; strength of Will, determination and courage will be needed for the journey home. These two paths together are our human journey and although we are fellow travellers who help each other along the way, it is truly a journey that each must ultimately make alone. There is a saying 'nothing comes from nothing.' Only by concerted effort in the right direction will progress towards the goal be made. In the *Secret Doctrine* this personal effort is stressed...

'The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.'<sup>9</sup>

Our self-transformation is a slow process as each unit (*Monad*), a spark of the divine, benefits from the advances made in each life, slowly building the results into its Causal Body, the store house of experiences. These experiences transform into Wisdom and its application on the terrestrial world is where we see a gradual expansion of consciousness expressed. It is an exceedingly slow process, unable to be detected in large increments or over one single life but can generally be witnessed by all, from the comparison of a thief or someone perpetuating cruelty to animals, to a Mother Teresa, a St Francis of Assisi or an Apollonius of Tyana. Some learn faster than others, some apply themselves with self-discipline and a developing Will more intently than others. As a collective family we can see advancement through the slow march of time with the abolition of slavery, the abolition of the death penalty in most countries, greater awareness of gender and diversity issues and an increasing global awareness about climate change which is rapidly sinking into humanity's consciousness.

In Madame Blavatsky's well-known poem, *There is a road, steep and thorny*, she wrote, 'For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling – the power to bless and save humanity;

for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.'<sup>10</sup> Each takes their own course, in their own time. Geoffrey Hodson informs us in *Sharing the Light* that in the latter stages of the journey to enlightenment, called the *Path of Swift Unfoldment*, progress is relatively rapid. This ensuing expansion of consciousness and moral enlightenment cannot fail to help all.

It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone.<sup>11</sup>

*The Path of Return* is being trodden by an increasing number of pilgrims; one day they will be the majority. While we despair at humanity's seeming lack of progress, we must be cognisant that humanity is perhaps yet but a teenager or in early adulthood. Mistakes will continue to be made as we mature, however vast tracts of time ahead allow us sufficient scope to outgrow our failings; assuming that we do not manage to destroy ourselves in the meanwhile.

Amongst the greyness of our times, hanging over us like heavy rain clouds, there is an important facet of human nature that still shines brightly; and that is hope. The opportunity for spiritual growth is actively being taken by a brave few and these rare gems are the hope of humanity. These gems are to be found in ever increasing numbers across the planet and each one of us is sure to recognise and know some of these courageous souls as they climb upwards on that steep and thorny road. Samwise Gamgee epitomises well the predicament of our age in *Lord of the Rings*:<sup>12</sup>

It's like in the great stories, Mr Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were and sometimes you didn't want to know the end. Because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing,



this shadow. Even darkness must pass. A new day will come. And when the sun shines it will shine out the clearer. Those were the stories that stayed with you. That meant something. Even if you were too small to understand why.

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*The Path of Return* is being trodden by an increasing number of pilgrims; one day they will be the majority.



Richard Sell joined the Theosophical Society as a teenager. He is currently President of the Auckland branch and Chair of the Governance Board for the New Zealand Section. Richard has presented both throughout New Zealand and internationally and contributes articles to theosophical magazines. He is active in promoting theosophy as a founder of the [theosophy.world](https://theosophy.world) resource website.



# Awakening Compassion - Deepening the Connection

## *National Presenters*

John Vorstermans  
Renée Sell

### *Our Lady's Home of Compassion - Island Bay, Wellington*

TSNZ CONVENTION 7-12 January 2021 (5 nights)

To awaken compassion within ourselves, to see the world with the eyes of love and to respect all life, are all facets of living a spiritual life.

- How do we deepen that connection within ourselves on a day to day basis?
- How do we make lasting change in our lives?
- How do we navigate our world in these unsettling times?

Come and join us as we explore together these questions and more through talks, guided meditations and workshops, over a few summer days at the beautiful venue: *Our Lady's Home of Compassion* in Wellington.



## *Presenters*



**John Vorstermans** is the National President of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand, Past-President of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS as well as Past-President of Wellington Branch and Auckland HPB Lodge. John has a deep interest in the ageless wisdom tradition and over recent times has focused on transformative processes that aid people to understand themselves and help create positive change in their lives.

Professionally, John has been self-employed and a director in several companies over the last 40 years, including other not-for-profit organisations.

**Renée Sell** has been a member of the Society for 22 years and during this time has been active in many different capacities, working locally at her branch, contributing at National Section and working in the role of Vice-President of the NZ Section for the past four and a half years.

Renée has been actively involved in the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) in New Zealand for 17 years and a part of many projects through this avenue. She is passionate about making the ancient wisdom teachings a living reality in her life. Renée says, "There is only 'living theosophy' as all else dies with the body." Renée's key focus is the practical application of theosophy as a way forward in a world in need of a new way of being.

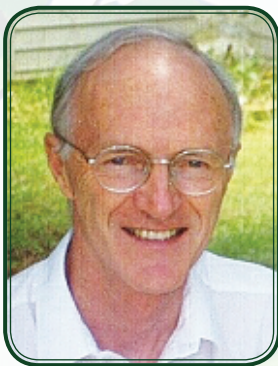
## *The Programme*

The Wellington Branch is hosting the January Convention 2021 of Theosophy in New Zealand at a delightful venue in Island Bay with a lively, relevant programme and a variety of interesting speakers.

The TSNZ Convention 2021 programme includes:

- Speakers from throughout the country including the National President, John Vorstermans and Vice-President, Renée Sell as well as popular National Speaker, Murray Stentiford, Wellington President, Sushma Webber and more...
- Spirited Q&A panel with guest speakers
- Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) special presentations
- Morning meditation and attunement
- Wellington outing
- Final evening entertainment.

All are part of the TSNZ Convention 2021 experience.



### *Local Speakers*



**Murray Stentiford**, National Speaker and facilitator with the TSNZ has a wide knowledge of spiritual, scientific and social issues. He is able to draw on this experience in dynamic presentations that bring the light of the Timeless Wisdom to bear on life in the world today.

Murray has held several positions of responsibility in TSNZ over the years. He has a Master's degree in Physics and is an accomplished musician. Murray sees Theosophy as a magnificent framework which relates to every facet of human existence.

**Sushma Webber** first visited Sri Ramanashramam at the age of five. She has been inspired by Ramana Maharishi's teachings, adding the dimension of silence to her study of Theosophical literature. Sushma is originally from India but has lived in New Zealand since 2008. She has a Master's degree in Art History and is President of Wellington Branch.



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*Make your plans and register soon for an Early Bird Discount.*

See also website: [www.theosophy.nz/](http://www.theosophy.nz/)



# Living Waters

Betty Bland contemplates the deeper meanings of a vital element of existence and the joy of life.

What an amazing feat it is to be able to send rockets to Mars! But not only that – we are also able to send robotic vehicles that relay pictures and scientific data about the surface rocks and subsoil. Recently, David and I had the privilege of attending one of the programs from the *National Geographic Live!* series held at the Field Museum in Chicago. Films and narrative about the latest findings from Mars, our neighbouring planet, were presented by Kobie Boykins, an engineer responsible for the solar panels used in the Mars Expedition rovers, *Spirit* and *Opportunity*. One of their striking findings is that, in addition to the polar icecaps, there may have been large bodies of water on Mars. Many of the formations on the surface appear to be dried lake or ocean beds. If this is true, and Mars did indeed have vast amounts of water, where are the lakes or oceans now? Is what happened to the water something that could potentially happen to our own vast bodies of water?

Of course no one knows for sure, as our science in this area is in its infancy. Yet when we can explore the surface of the moon or another planet, it makes us realise afresh the great gift of our little space-island home and the importance of working in cooperation with all who share this habitation, that we might sustain it and flourish. This is the reverberating message of all who have explored space and our relative place in the solar system. Because of stories, legend and even some of our Theosophical writings, a big question in the minds of many has been, “Is there, or could there have been, life on Mars?” The identification of ice caps in the Polar Regions certainly indicates the presence of water, and now the identification of probable lake beds makes it seem that there may have been vast amounts of

water at some time in the distant past. The question of the presence of water is crucial because in our Earth’s environment, wherever water is to be found, there is life. This is true for the deepest oceans around the hot and toxic fumaroles, the icy waters of the Arctic and Antarctic, as well as fresh water lakes, whether they be highly acidic, salty, or basic.

Water seems to be an essential element for life. It is the solvent in which minerals and proteins can combine and blend in order to build living forms. Even our bodies are composed of at least 60 percent water. Without the circulatory and lymphatic systems (our blood is 83 percent water), there would be no way to support the various chemical and biological processes necessary for life as a complex organism. The great solvent circulates chemical messages and nutrients, and washes away the wastes and impurities in such a way that the systems function as a cohesive whole.

In religious traditions and myths, water is used as a symbol for attaining a more meaningful life. If there is a desert, or dry and thirsty land, it is symbolic of a psychological state in which one feels empty or devoid of meaning. Jesus had to face his temptations in the desert. The Israelites had to wander in the desert for 40 years before they could enter the Promised Land. And of course all of the lands around the avaricious dragon Smaug’s lair, of Tolkien fame, were parched and barren. Where there is water, however, the desert blooms and life flourishes in abundance. The holy Mt Kailash in western Tibet is the traditional source of the four great rivers, the Ganges, Indus, Sutlej and Brahmaputra, and as such is considered sacred by the Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Don religions. It is said

to be the abode of the Hindu god Shiva.

The sacred lotus flower of the East, while having its roots in the physical earth and its blossom in the open sunlight, requires water to support its stem. If the mud represents the physical and the blossom in the open sunlight above is emblematical of spiritual enlightenment, then let us consider the meaning of the intervening water. The moisture of life seems to be related to consciousness, but not just any consciousness. Angry, violent, or selfish people are conscious, but they would be said to still be living in the desert.

The way to drink deeply of the living waters is to apply consciousness toward meaning and wholeness. Though not easily achieved, this can be accomplished incrementally by directing attention to the inner life, studying the works of sages, and being open to the insights that come from meditation. Slowly we can each cultivate our consciousness to become the living waters of compassionate unity. And gradually, as we learn to identify with a higher purpose, we breathe moisture around us to others who may also begin to wake up to a higher purpose.

Mars was known as the fierce god of war, and borne in that mythology is a truth for our instruction. Perhaps that warring energy is what turned his namesake planet into a desert, if it ever did support life forms. We should take note of the capability that we humans have to turn our unique garden spot in the solar system into a similar wasteland through our lack of concern for environmental issues and our bellicose and greedy natures. But the root causes lie within each of us as individuals. The moisture of the consciousness of each one of us, enlightened, or at least aiming in that direction, serves to water the gardens of earth and encourage the desert of our existence to flower. In the Second Fragment of *The Voice of the Silence*, Madame Blavatsky compares this kind of consciousness to Amrita's clear waters, which are an essential ingredient in the bread of Wisdom. Maya's dew is the consciousness of hatred and selfishness.

“Great Sifter” is the name of the “Heart Doctrine,” O disciple. (v.120)

The wheel of the good Law moves swiftly on. It grinds by night and day. The worthless husks it drives from out the golden grain, the refuse from the flour. The hand of Karma guides the wheel; the revolutions mark the beatings of the Karmic heart. (v. 121)

True knowledge is the flour, false learning is the husk. If thou would'st eat the bread of Wisdom, thy flour thou hast to knead with Amrita's [immortality] clear waters. But if thou kneadest husks with Maya's dew, thou canst create but food for the black doves of death, the birds of birth, decay and sorrow. (v. 122)

If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings—tell them they lie. (v.123)

On a daily basis, consider your life and how you might add to the well-being of another; think of the beauty and treasures of this earth; explore the deep recesses of your heart for meaning and purpose in the realms of immortality. By doing so, each day you will be increasing the joy, gratitude and understanding that fills our lives and our planet with living waters.



Betty Bland, past President of the Theosophical Society in America currently serves on boards of the Theosophical Order of Service and the Theosophical Book Gift Institute. An active worker for the Society since 1970, Betty's emphasis continues to be practical applications of Theosophy.

The way to drink deeply of the living waters is to apply consciousness toward meaning and wholeness.

# A THEOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON PANDEMICS

The main reason for this current cycle of evolution for humanity is about Emotional Maturity, a mystery for many people, claims **Barry Bowden**.

Faith is a source of strength, when it is drawn from within.

While we have emotions, they are not us. Negative emotions and their causes are dealt with at their roots, which lie in the psychological nature of the human being. Eventually these emotional roots are searched out, felt and guided by our inner nature. Hence, the *witness* state is born: developing an understanding of the very meaning of *impersonal*. This knowledge is useful but has little power to change the person from within.

Only when the intellect becomes the knower, when it cognises firsthand, can it know! However, when it is understood on a practical level, emotions are cognisant, and their patterns are the essence of reactions. When this is experienced from within, it kills out the roots of fear and all its attractions to time, such as anxiety and depression. The person can now stand alone, not needing the herd to lean on, nor anyone else. Comfortably and happily standing alone, they can experience and begin to use positive emotions. The lower mind is also, to some extent, understood. But the full maturity of the mind will have to be left to the next great cycle.

The current pandemic is just part of this cycle. Emotional maturity, if there is any, will come to the fore now. If it does not, then growth will still happen, but through suffering. To illustrate this on a deeper level, a question from A. O. Hume to Master K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* provides a Theosophical perspective:

Q: For what difference can there be, to take the case of suicides, whether these be conscious or unconscious, whether the man blows his brains out, or only drinks or womanizes himself to death, or kills himself by overstudy? In each case equally the normal natural hour of death is anticipated and a spirit and not a shell the result – or again what difference does it make whether a man is hung for murder, killed in battle, in a railway train or a powder explosion, or drowned or burnt to death, or knocked over by cholera or plague, or jungle fever or any of the other thousand and one epidemic diseases of which the seeds were not ab initio in his constitution, but were introduced therein in consequence of his happening to visit a particular locality or undergo a given experience, both of which he might have avoided?

A: As for those who were “knocked over by cholera, or plague, or jungle fever” they could not have succumbed had they not the germs for the development of such diseases in them from birth.

To catch any disease, it therefore would appear that we must be born with the germ. This idea is also prevalent in

Naturopathy. It puts a different spin on how we believe we catch bugs. This raises the question whether anyone can succumb to a disease of any kind, unless it is necessitated by the Law of Karma. The question also involves the carrier of the disease; they are surely a messenger of the person's own Karma and if it would not be passed on by them, then it will unavoidably be by someone else.

However, we must be careful not to fall into fear. Fear weakens our every defence mechanism. Fear has no relationship with truth. All fears, when brought directly before our reasoning, vanish! Worst of all, fear breeds the very condition we worry about at present: dis-ease.

We are affected by the thoughts and feelings of others, particularly when there is a commonality of them in our community. These types of thoughts and emotions that have little strength are often poorly understood by their creators and easily give off fear. The nature of this type of thinking is infectious. With care, we do not have to take this way of thinking on or entertain it. The opposite of vagueness in thought and reactionary emotions which are careless of others, is the strength of thought that does not cause harm to others.

Faith is a source of strength, when it is drawn from within. When it is drawn from outside, i.e. other people's words, it is no longer faith. When faith lives in our heart, it will guide and sustain us. Real faith connects us to the higher worlds and more wonderful than that, we feel it from within. Faith is a path to Self-Realisation. It is little understood how a powerful, strong emotion in a large group of people can overtake other individuals; we call it mob-mentality. We need to be careful to understand that while people may be separate physically, they are not separate in thoughts and emotions, and can become the herd. At present, the herd is frightened. When frightened, it is easily controlled; unfortunately organised religious institutions have used this method only too well in the past. Let us consider the words from H.P. Blavatsky:

Mankind is at best a sorry herd of Panurgian sheep, following blindly the leader that happens to suit it at the moment. Mankind – the majority at any rate – hates to think for itself. It resents as an insult the humblest invitation to step for a moment outside the old well-beaten tracks, and, judging for itself, to enter into a new path in some fresh direction. Give it an unfamiliar problem to solve, and if its mathematicians, not liking its looks, refuse to deal with it, the crowd, unfamiliar with mathematics, will stare at the unknown quantity, and getting hopelessly entangled in sundry x's and y's, will turn round, trying to rend to pieces the uninvited disturber of its intellectual Nirvana. This may, perhaps, account for the ease and extraordinary success enjoyed by the Roman Church in her conversions of nominal Protestants and Freethinkers, whose name is legion, but who have never gone to the trouble

of thinking for themselves on these most important and tremendous problems of man's inner nature.

*Collected Writings, H.P.B. XIV p.17.*

Now it really is time not to follow, rather to find our facts, understand, and find refuge within our *self*. If you have not yet found that refuge, then surely it is time to start. If we do not regularly meditate, how could we ever find that refuge within? What follows next is an introduction to the Astral Light from *The Theosophical Glossary* by H.P. Blavatsky:

Astral Light – The invisible region that surrounds our globe, as it does every other, and corresponding as the second Principle of Kosmos ... to the '*Linga Sharira*' or the Astral Double in man. A subtle Essence visible only to a clairvoyant eye, and the lowest but one (*viz.*, the earth), of the Seven *Akâsic* or Kosmic Principles.

The Astral Light reflects and reverses the higher planes into what forms the lower planes. They are the planes we are partly familiar with. To show what difference in consciousness the Astral Light makes: our lower mind sees only form, and forms the *personal life*; the higher mind sees consciousness and is *impersonal*. The impersonal has no cognisance of the senses. Pause for a moment and consider how much our life is formed by our senses. If we are honest, our self-sensory life forms a very large part of what we call life. The higher is unaware of that life, yet in another way it is aware of the lower life, excluding the senses. There is a gulf between the two; and this gulf is the Akashic recording of every good and evil thought, word and deed in the Astral Light. There have been many epidemics. This quote by H.P. Blavatsky mentions how the Astral Light reflects and intensifies all that is emotional and mental, which is a source of epidemics on Earth:

Eliphas Lévi calls it the great Serpent and the Dragon from which radiates on Humanity every evil influence. This is so; but why not add that the Astral Light gives out nothing but what it has received; that it is the great terrestrial crucible, in which the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics – moral, psychic and physical. [*ibid.*, cont.]

Every resistance that we meet in life, and the continuation of that life in the after death states, which is taking the shape of suffering, will speed up our development as compassionate and wise human beings. Consider:

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment. [*Light on the Path; The Three Truths — end of Fragment 1*]

As this quote shows, we have created each problem, ailment

Be the  
change you  
wish to see in  
the world.

*Mahatma Gandhi*

or disease. On a larger scale, humanity is the same; on mass, the self-centred world in which we live is constantly pouring out jealousy, fear, anger and distrust, only finding value in money and this is all reflected back onto humanity. Over time, Nature being herself intelligent, will find a way to disperse this maleficent force. Remember who is at the source and the original creator in this 'humanity'. It is sobering to contemplate this idea for a while, but by doing so, a person is addressing their own problems, and curing themselves from within. Then this person becomes a healer of humanity, whether they are active or not physically. They always radiate this, and become healers without trying. This takes us back to the start: *Emotional Maturity* is the cure for what is happening to the world at present; its cause: emotional immaturity. H.P. Blavatsky wrote in *Isis Unveiled*, Chapter VII — Modern Ignorance of Vital Force:

Plato divides the intellectual progress of the universe during every cycle into fertile and barren periods. In the sublunary regions, the spheres of the various elements remain eternally in perfect harmony with the divine nature, he says; "but their parts," owing to a too close proximity to earth, and their commingling with the earthly (which is matter, and therefore the realm of evil), "are sometimes according, and sometimes contrary to (divine) nature." When those circulations – which Eliphas Levi calls 'currents of the astral light' – in the universal ether which contains in itself every element, take place in harmony with the divine spirit, our earth and everything pertaining to it enjoys a fertile period. The occult powers of plants, animals, and minerals magically sympathise with the 'superior natures,' and the divine soul of man is in perfect intelligence with these 'inferior' ones. But during the barren periods, the latter lose their magic sympathy, and the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit.

We are in such a time at present. It is of course not to be forgotten that these barren periods, described by Plato, are the fastest times that evolution of the individual takes place – if they move themselves. It is a self-determined and self-devised effort that makes this growth possible; that effort needs to be intelligently coupled with dedication to action. With intellect alone growth happens within the mind, there being little change outwardly.

We are in a very interesting time right now: fear weakens every aspect within the human being. Fear provides no answer. Positive action by an individual will change their outlook and how each one of us in turn, affects others.

Joy and sorrow are inseparable ... together they come and when one sits alone with you ... remember that the other is asleep upon your bed.

*Kahlil Gibran*



Barry Bowden has been farming most of his life and is an avid reader of classical Theosophy. He has practised what he read and finds Theosophy transformational. A National Lecturer for the TS in Australia Barry was a much appreciated speaker at two TSNZ Conventions.

## CALL FOR TSNZ NOMINATIONS FOR TWO GOVERNANCE BOARD MEMBERS

Nominations are now open for two Governance Board members for the Theosophical Society in New Zealand. These are for a three-year term, commencing after the AGM in January 2021. Each proposed nominee must have been a member of the Society in good standing for a minimum of three consecutive years. Nominations must be in writing and proposed by five current members of the Society, who have been members in good standing for no less than three consecutive years.

Candidates are to provide, along with their nominations, on one A4 page:

- A short statement of their background.
- A visionary statement.
- A passport size photo.
- Description of previous experience including relevant experience in leadership, finance, governance, strategy and policy development or similar leadership and business skills.

These details will be included in the ballot paper.

Nominations with all the required details must reach the Election Officer by 4pm, Wednesday 30 September 2020 at 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051.

Details of the role descriptions for these positions and nomination forms can be obtained from the National Section Office or Website at: <https://theosophy.nz/about/jobs>

INTRODUCING



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*It is not our words that influence people so much as our lives; our lives if they are unselfish, pure, loving and helpful are the best propaganda of theosophical ideas; for it is no good to talk theosophy unless we live what we talk.*

Annie Besant

# IMAGINING A NEW WORLD

Overcoming mind paralysis, reinvigorating originality...



Tim Wyatt considers how powerful thought processes can be in creating a better world.

Original thought is a rare and exotic commodity. It should be prized and cherished. More often than not it is trashed, or ignored, or ridiculed. Here we have the history of the ages. New ideas frighten people. So do new ways of stating old ideas. They are resisted, often violently. Sinister, dark forces at work on this planet, exoteric and esoteric, employ fear and doubt to impede human progress. They despise progress and always want to maintain a stasis, the status quo.

Despite implacable opposition, however, original thoughts and new ideas do smash through the barriers eventually. How many people have even one original idea in their lives? Very, very few. Most people simply copy and regurgitate the ideas and opinions originated by others they believe to be more knowledgeable or powerful. Usually those in control. Most people are sheep. Sheep are ignorant and are only capable of slavish conformity. Sheep are never innovators or originators. Sheep are very proud of not having to think for themselves. Thinking requires effort. And

it can be dangerous, too.

However, we should elevate the mind and all its stupendous powers to a status higher than we have ever imagined before. By definition, having an esoteric perspective on the world necessitates a high degree of free thought and expression as well as non-conformity. The occult perspective is usually diametrically opposed to the conventional or prevailing wisdom presented by science, religion or politics. History shows us that the prevailing wisdom can be wrong.

In the past, indulging in dangerously radical explanations of oneself or the cosmos could get you killed. Look at Giordano Bruno or Socrates. These days free speech can still earn you a death sentence at the hands of primitive religionists or political fanatics. Engaging in freedom of expression can also see you punished in many other ways. Even the jails of so-called Western democracies incarcerate those with undesirable words or opinions. At no time in human history

has the need been greater for fresh ways of thinking which stretch the human imagination beyond the confines of the physical world.

Many people are not aware of the fact that our thoughts directly create the world we live in. Thoughts are the template and invisible building-blocks of the physical world. Look more closely at this highly defective world we have produced. It precisely mirrors the mass myriad thoughts employed in its creation, from the aspirations of its main architects down to the sweat of the armies of builders. And that whole mind-set has been based upon an almost exclusively materialistic paradigm and worldview. This is a world of ownership, division, conflict and inequality in which participants will go to any length to ascend the greasy pole of power which gives sway, influence and success.

This view goes something like this: There is nothing beyond the physical. If I cannot see it, touch it, taste it, feel it, smell it and test it to destruction in an atom-smasher

or test-tube, it simply does not exist. Anything else is *just* imagination. *Just* imagination. As if imagination were just another optional extra to bolt on to our everyday consciousness; as if it had no validity and could be condemned as idle day-dreaming or wishful fantasy. As if imagination were not the most powerful tool we possess in our not inconsiderable armoury. Imagination is the biggest challenge – and threat – to the material world. It is also our best ally and asset in overturning it.

We have imagined this world and now we need to imagine an alternative. If we re-make it with the mind-sets and thought processes we employed to create our present environment, then nothing will change. We will have another plundered and impoverished planet based on a fetish for wealth, greed, self-interest, human and planetary exploitation and mass control by tiny elites.

The new world needs to be mentally reconstructed from the deepest subterranean depths of our imaginations. For this to happen our imaginations need to be unshackled from their bonds, paroled from their self-imposed prisons and set free to roam unhindered along the highways and byways of the earth. We need new ideas, new thoughts and new intentions for this new world. We need originality. Not a cut and paste solution.

For this to succeed we need to achieve a critical mass so that these new ideas can explode into the world with the power of a split atom. Does not this mean this is not the case. Had it been so, then the ideas of a few brave, usually persecuted, individuals down the ages would never have taken hold. Initially, at least, change emerges from individuals and small groups. It takes only a surprisingly small proportion of any population to effect real and immediate change. It has always been that way. This is the power of occult focus.

It has been suggested that it only takes the square root of one per cent of any population to produce significant change. Small numbers of people can have a hugely disproportionate effect. Military planners know this. They're aware that a handful of highly-trained special forces can have a more destructive or strategic effect than an entire battalion of soldiers if used in the right way.

With a global population of 7.5 billion people then the square root of one per cent of that is only 8,660 people. A tiny figure. The equivalent of a small town. In my country, Britain (which has a little under one per cent of the world's population) that would be around eighty people. About the number you could fit on a London double-decker bus. Focused with fresh ideas and suffused powerfully enough with a common aim, these eighty people could act as the vanguard in transforming this country economically, culturally, politically, socially and environmentally. They would succeed because they would be indulging a major act of white magic.

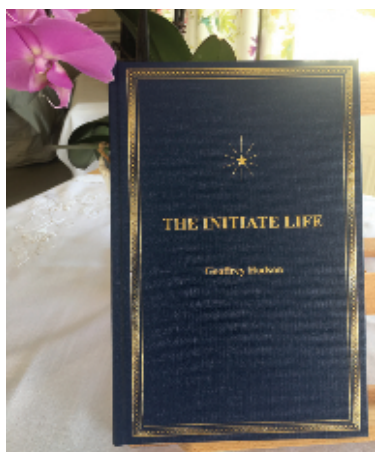
In the spiritual war, those who wish to re-make this world are warriors.

It takes only a surprisingly small proportion of any population to effect real and immediate change.



Tim Wyatt, a West Yorkshire, UK journalist, writer, broadcaster, musician and actor has studied the Ageless Wisdom since the 1960s. Tim lectures at TS lodges and runs a School of Applied Wisdom. He co-founded publishing house Nosegay Books and is a former BBC, ITV and Sky reporter and award-winning documentary film maker. Tim founded music production company Hummadruz Records.





## The Initiate Life

*A Guide to the Path of Hastened Unfoldment by Geoffrey Hodson*

*The Path of Hastened Unfoldment* is one of Geoffrey Hodson's key teachings and this new book, compiled from his talks and study notes, contains material on this very subject. It is relevant for the serious student, aspirant, disciple, or initiate. While many of the talks were addressed to Theosophical Society members and audiences, the message of the Ancient Wisdom and the Path of Swift Unfoldment is applicable to all humanity.

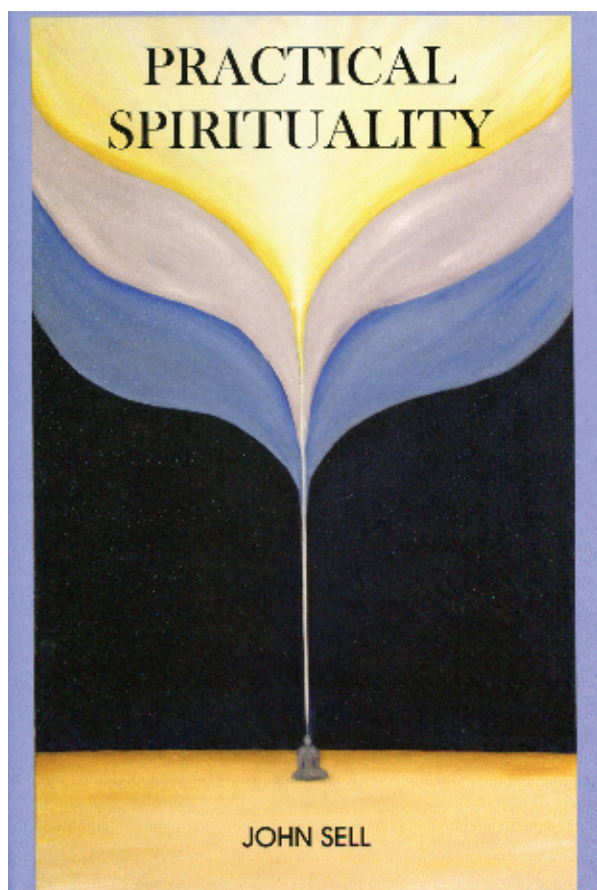
Geoffrey Hodson is acknowledged the world over for his near lifelong dedication to spreading the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophia, and for his depth of knowledge of its multifaceted aspects. He was so highly regarded that wherever he travelled, people sought his counsel and were guided by his unique insight.

Order online at: <https://theosophy.nz> Email: [nvp@theosophy.org.nz](mailto:nvp@theosophy.org.nz)

Book cost: NZD \$85; free postage within New Zealand extended for 2020; postage overseas: NZD \$40

The Theosophical Publishing House, Auckland (2018).

## PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY Selected Works of John Sell



Two of John Sell's qualities that come through this book are his sincerity and his ability to engage the reader... This is evident in every chapter, providing uplifting support as the reader delves into what are often difficult and complex issues on the path to self-understanding and personal transformation.

*Practical Spirituality* also contains a useful article by Elizabeth Sell [who edited the work] titled *Service: A Dynamic Challenge*, that focuses on the importance of committing ourselves to practical activities that are of lasting value to both the local and world communities. In addition to illustrations by John Sell and Lionel Taylor, *Practical Spirituality* contains full-colour reproductions of rare paintings by Elizabeth Sell that are as beautiful as they are inspiring.

*Practical Spirituality: Selected Works of John Sell* offers a wealth of useful, step-by-step teachings of Theosophy that will challenge, inform and inspire. In addition to being important to the library of every theosophical lodge or study centre, this will be a 'core text' for individual students wishing to expand their insight, compassion and understanding of life's mysteries.

Extracts from review by Nathaniel Altman in the American TS magazine *Quest*, Fall 2019. See complete book review on line at [www.theosophy.nz/](http://www.theosophy.nz/)

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# H.P.B. The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky

## Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement

by Sylvia Cranston

A SPECIAL BOOK REVIEW BY WARWICK KEYS



Helena Blavatsky is the stand-out theosophical thinker, for me. Her abilities, exoteric and esoteric, remain unmatched more than 100 years after her death. HPB, as she is often respectfully and affectionately called, stands head and shoulders above other talented thinkers of her era.

Sylvia Cranston's seminal biography *H.P.B.: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* is an essential book for all theosophical students. It took 100 years after HPB's death before a full definitive biography could be written. It has since become the standard life account of the primary co-founder of the Theosophical Society.

This book is an authoritative, well researched, delightful and inspiring biography on Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, from birth until her sacred mission was completed. Blavatsky had an exceptional childhood, was well educated, highly gifted and through time learned to control the psychic phenomena which played around her. Throughout her life HPB remained fiercely loyal to her Master whom she met physically at least twice and many times astrally. From her early days she felt His protection. The biographical material makes fascinating reading as it weaves the story of this remarkable woman, HPB. While the tale borders on the incredible, back-up references and eyewitness accounts confirm its historicity.

HPB's strong personality and influence touched many notable people, including Gandhi, Nehru, N. Roerich, Yeats, A.E. Russell and Alfred Lord Tennyson who kept HPB's *The Voice of the*

*Silence* by his bedside. We learn that HPB never bore malice or criticism of herself but erased it all from her memory. She stressed that Occultism is "knowledge of the soul" and that one becomes "a beneficent force of nature." In her own words she was "engaged in a work that would someday free mankind from mental bondage." HPB accepted the tremendous task which was hers to do, reintroducing the tenets of Theosophy to the world. Her extensive, deep and truly inspiring works are a most valuable legacy for humanity.

The author, Sylvia Cranston (aka Anita Atkins, 1915 – 2000) spent her whole working life at The United Lodge of Theosophists, New York City. She never married and chose to direct her efforts towards humanity through lectures for various theosophical groups and organisations, teaching Theosophy School at ULT as well as participating in innumerable radio interviews and some major television interviews. To many researchers and academics in the world, Sylvia Cranston has also become a respected authority in the field of Reincarnation.

Today, all Cranston's books are in print, available in multiple languages throughout the world and remain beacons of light for individuals searching for soul-knowledge on their chosen life path. This biography is exceptional and informative. It is a 'must read book' for all Theosophists.

*This book is available at Vasanta House Library: [theosophy.org.nz](http://theosophy.org.nz)*

Warwick Keys, speaker, researcher, writer and photographer, is a past TSNZ National President and lifetime member of Theosophy Wanganui.



Renée Sell, National Coordinator for the Theosophical Order of Service in New Zealand, highlights workers past and present who have given much time and energy to the TOS.



The TOS was started in 1908 by the then TS President Annie Besant. The TOS mission statement is both beautiful, practical and relevant today: 'To unite all who love in the service of all that suffers.'

TOS workers spread throughout New Zealand and further afield, toil diligently at administration, local group level or TOS fundraising and Convention. You will know some of these shining lights. If you wish to be involved or would like to sponsor a child, please email me at: [tos@theosophy.org.nz](mailto:tos@theosophy.org.nz)

At international level, Nancy Secret coordinates all the countries where the TOS is active. Dorothy Bell has been involved internationally in the TOS, and supported TOS NZ in the capacity of facilitator, panel participant, and once as a courier bringing us a signed book from Joy Mills in the USA.

Sandra Chase Hodson is an unsung TOS worker from the 1940s. She was well-respected and in the background supporting her husband Geoffrey Hodson in all facets of his work, including editing and compiling her husband's writings. Sandra was a National Lecturer and National President of the NZ section. She was also Vice-President of the NZ Vegetarian Society started under the umbrella of the TOS, of which she was head at the time.

These wonderful TOS workers and supporters, pictured here, are often behind the scenes, working hard with dedication and commitment. All are part of the TOS family and have chosen to be lights radiating out to the community. Heartfelt thanks and gratitude to them all. There are many others who participate in our TOS family and appreciation goes to all who have helped make the TOS in NZ what it is today.

In these unprecedented times of fear and uncertainty, it takes courage, love and dedication to stay the course in service to humanity. Workers are still needed! You may ask how? One way is with thoughts surrounding the human family with love, light and peace. We can take time to be present and meditate for the love of humanity, the One Life that is. Every thought that raises our vibration, raises the vibration of every human being on this Earth. The spiritual axiom 'we are one' is the living truth of what many spiritual seekers, saints and seers know by discovering it in their own hearts. We are being called to raise our own vibration and to trust the Knowing inside us. Let us link up around NZ and the world and be ONE in this work together for humanity.

The TS Order of Service was brought into being as a call to action in the world, to support the TS in its work of realisation of its First Object in creating universal kinship of the human family and to: minimise suffering in the world, forget self in the working for others, eliminate selfishness and substitute love as the rule of the world and live to the highest that is within us. In our call to action, we can meditate together as a group, or in our homes linking up to others around the world with thoughts of love, light and peace for our human family. Let us not wait any longer, humanity needs each one of us to do our part at this time wherever we are.



Annie Besant – Founder of TOS 1908.



Vicki Jerome, long term TOS NZ worker and liaison for India and Pakistan child sponsorships.



Sue Harrison, TOS sponsorship liaison, financials and TOS NZ worker.



Carol Collier, TOS supporter, worker, leads a TOS group in the Waikato.



Sandra Chase Hodson, TOS worker from the 1940s.



Nancy Secrest, International Secretary for the TOS.



Dorothy Bell, TOS supporter both internationally and locally.



Barbara Zanarb, TOS NZ supporter and worker.



A TOS panel with Coordinator Renée Sell interviewing International TOS workers: Jean Carroll, Dorothy Bell & Tim Boyd.



Anthea Clement, long term TOS NZ supporter.



Sue Mitchell, TOS NZ worker and supporter.

That is what I want you to help me in,  
to make the world beautiful for others.

*Dr Annie Besant's last address, from Headquarters Hall 1931*

To help contact:  
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# Vegetarians Today



From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, **Margaret Johns** reflects on the life journey and how best to thrive...

The past few months have given us time to reflect on how we are living, how we are treating others and the planet, and on life itself. Enforced isolation and fear of catching Coronavirus instilled in people feelings of destabilisation, frustration, uncertainty and a tendency to 'lash out' at others if threatened, put down or patronised.

Food and nutrition are very important in these times to keep the body and psyche healthy and balanced: lack of sufficient vitamins and minerals can have a marked effect on people's outlook on life and behaviour. Food fads and diets tend to emphasise protein and iron, but as Dr Malcolm Mackay writes in the *Nourish* magazine, 14th May 2020:

The focus on protein, and particularly animal protein, is the most persistent myth in sports nutrition. No one who consumes adequate calories from a variety of whole plant foods is likely to suffer reduced performance due to lack of protein. ... All whole plant foods [legumes, nuts and wholegrains] are a complex 'package deal' with varying amounts of protein. Only processed foods like olive oil, coconut oil and sugar contain zero protein. The natural plant protein package also includes an abundance of health-supporting phytonutrients and dietary fibre, which are absent from the animal protein 'package'. In fact, animal proteins often include health damaging and inflammatory substances.

<https://nourishmagazine.com.au/health/plant-performance/>

Rhianna Redcliff APD, writing on iron on the *Doctors for Nutrition* website:

Plant foods happen to be abundant in this vital mineral. For example, 100 grams of cashews contain almost twice

the amount of iron as 100 grams of cooked beef. When you consider this alone, it's not hard to see why vegans and vegetarians can often consume more iron than people who choose to eat animal products.

<https://www.doctorsfornutrition.org/post/ironing-out-the-facts>

If we accept the premise that everything and everyone comes from the one (spiritual) source and is part of the web of life and that we are all on a journey travelling back to that source by a myriad of paths, then we are able to help others by both nourishing our own body and spiritual nature and helping others to nourish theirs. Share nutritious, tasty whole plant food with neighbours, family and friends; accept that we are all linked and therefore what affects one, affects others too, remain calm and compassionate in the face of calamity and encourage kindness, not just to humans but also to animals and plants. People are influenced more by how you live your life and treat others than by what you say.

If you are looking to start your journey on the whole plant food path or feel you need to rejuvenate your taste buds with some new plant food recipes and adventures, the NZ Vegetarian Society is here to help. The website [www.vegetarian.org.nz](http://www.vegetarian.org.nz) contains all sorts of interesting nutritional information, charts, recipes and recipe books. You can support the work of the Society by joining as a member and receiving the quarterly magazine, or just signing up to receive the bright, informative monthly e-Newsletter. Help yourself and in doing so, help the world on the path towards a kinder, more compassionate future. With Spring on the doorstep, here is a colourful pasta salad from Anna Valentine<sup>1</sup> who supplies the recipes for our *Vegetarian Living NZ* magazine:

## PASTA SALAD (Serves 4)

This is the most simple pasta salad ever, but sometimes with family food, simple is best. Please note, any pasta will do: gluten-free, paleo or wholemeal. Even if you only have a tiny patch of garden or just a pot, you can grow calendula or borage. Once you have it, it pops up year after year while nasturtiums and onion weed grow wild all over New Zealand.<sup>2</sup>

Gather your ingredients together and put a large pan of water on to boil. Prepare then set aside, the following ingredients:

- 1 x 400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 4-5 tomatoes, sliced into bite-sized pieces, or 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup edible flowers and/or fresh herbs such as chives, basil, dill or parsley
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

Once the water has come to the boil, add:

- 1 tsp salt
- 300g dried pasta shapes of choice

Cook the pasta as per instructions until just cooked, then empty into

a colander in the sink. Transfer the cooked pasta into a bowl and add the prepared ingredients along with:

- 1 tsp flaked sea salt
- ¼ tsp cracked black pepper

Toss together well and top with a few extra petals.



To add green beans to the salad, first top and tail them and cut them into 5mm slices. Add to the pasta boiling water one minute before the pasta is fully cooked. Drain the beans along with the pasta. You can add feta cheese (dairy or alternative), leftover grilled or roasted vegetables, pesto, beans, snow peas, avocado, olives or sprouted pulses.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Anna Valentine runs The Veggie Tree Cook School in Kaero, Northland [www.theveggietree.com/](http://www.theveggietree.com/)
- 2 Check out The Veggie Tree website for more information on edible weeds and flowers.



More recipes, information and the NZVS revised and updated *Home Tried Favourites* recipe book, are now available from [www.vegetarian.org.nz](http://www.vegetarian.org.nz)

## Vasanta House Library



Books can be ordered from the library at TSNZ national headquarters by using the postal facility available and contacting the librarian at email: library@theosophy.org.nz or 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, or telephone 09 523 1797 (Saturday afternoons).

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$10.

## Vasanta House Accommodation

Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements.

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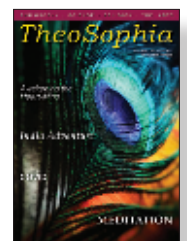
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# Theosophy

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

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

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

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

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

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## WHAT DO THEOSOPHICAL IDEAS MEAN IN DAILY LIFE AND HOW DO WE LIVE BY THEM?

Theosophical ideas have some very specific and practical implications; for example:

- The world we live in is basically a good place when we love wisely. It is to be treasured and to be honoured; rejoice in life.
- We develop as human beings, not by forsaking the world, but by cooperating with nature to preserve and perfect it; respect the environment and be ecologically responsible.
- You and I are different expressions of the same life, so whatever happens to either of us happens to both of us. Our wellbeing is linked; help your neighbour, and thereby help yourself.
- Disharmony and evil are the result of ignorance and selfishness; live in harmony and goodness so as to teach others by your life as well as by your words.

<http://theosophy.nz>

Let us judge our spirituality by our effect on the world...  
What are we here for, save to help each other,  
to love each other, to uplift each other?

*Annie Besant*



September 2020