

The Wine of Life

by Katherine Tingley

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About the Author: Katherine Tingley was leader of the Theosophical Society (then named the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society) from 1896 to 1929, and is remembered particularly for her educational and social reform work centered at the Society's international headquarters at Point Loma, California. The chapters are virtually verbatim transcripts of lectures given by the author in the 1920s, which have been edited to modernize punctuation and to remove dated references and repetition. The usage of "man" and "men" to include members of both sexes has been retained.

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Chapter 1

NATURE, THE MIGHTY MOTHER

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom. Unsullied by the hand of Matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit — the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdom.

Then will she show thee the means and way, the first gate and the second, the third, up to the very seventh. And then, the goal — beyond which lie, bathed in the sunlight of the Spirit, glories untold, unseen by any save the eye of Soul. — H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*

I — The Mighty Mother

I have looked over the blue waters of the Pacific, and watched the sun rise above the mountains and listened to mockingbirds singing, and the beauty of the awakening world grew marvelous for me with suggestions of the hidden harmonies of life. Then I thought of humanity and wondered what would happen could the veil of external things fall from before our eyes and reveal the glory of the law: we should stand in silence motionless, thrilled through with the grace and plenitude of its compassion.

Long ago there was a time when men lived in purity of thought and act, knew little of selfishness, and moved through the experiences of their incarnations not bound down or interfered with as the human mind is today. Better than we do they understood how to conduct their lives: there was not the rush and whirl of things. They lived more inwardly, in communion with what is best and noblest — the splendor of spiritual life was manifest, and through all human consciousness shone deepest reverence for nature and truth. Better than we do, too, they knew how to work with nature, and found in her something the people of modern times have never discovered.

How many today are satisfied with their lives or sure that they possess the truth or know whence they came when they were born or, after death, whither they are going? Yet there is a promise in our hearts and in the divine law that all that mankind has been, it shall be again, and all that we have forgone we shall recover.

We lost touch ages ago with the Mighty Mother, nature, and now need to go to her again, for the most part in her forests or on her hilltops or by the seashore, to find our own souls in her quiet places and to learn that all matter responds to the spiritual touch. Out beyond hearing and seeing and thinking are infinite laws that control our lives. Divine laws hold us in their keeping: immediately behind the veil of visible things, and but a little way from the consciousness of our mortal selves, are higher forces at work for our good.

They speak to the soul to make the way broad and beautiful; they speak to us at all times through the sunlit sky and the starlight. The shining silences of nature proclaim to us always the greatness of the world and the hidden grandeur of man, so that in the desert, in the deep caverns of the earth, under the heaviest weight of sorrow, "he that hath ears to hear" is never alone. Were he lost in the great waste places or in a rudderless boat on the open sea, or were he on the brink of created things and far from the world of men, he would carry within him still the kingdom of heaven and might find in his heart all the revelations for which humanity is longing.

It is the spiritual message that the world is crying for: a baptism of the spirit of the divinity of man, whereby we should be made to realize that the heavens are opening to our needs; that the light is breaking and new stars are shining; that the things we do not see are greater than the things we see — what the heart yearns for more than we know; that nature is supremely just, and in all this grand universal scheme of being not a

thought, not an aspiration, not the smallest effort is lost or wasted.

You who are despairing, who have little faith in yourselves or hope of tomorrow or belief that you can control your conditions, seek aid here of the Great Mother: look up into the blue sky or the stars, catch in the air the feeling of her universal life, and then examine yourselves and discover that many of your sorrows have come to you because you have not been willing to suffer. There are treasures of experience in suffering. Any real attainment must come through discipline; no matter how it may be outwardly, we can meet it as that which will call forth the stronger side of us, until it becomes at last the pride and joy of our lives and we love it as we love the sunshine and the aroma of flowers.

We cannot succeed unless we work with nature, who will not accept half-hearted service. We receive no answer when we call to her only in moments of dilemma or disappointment and then turn again and desert her. She has no word for the insincere or indifferent; she responds only to those whose minds are awake to the highest aims. It is as we reach out in thought to the best and noblest that her answer comes back to us. Out of the great dark surroundings of life dawns the enlightenment of the inner man when the soul of man shall speak, and we who were under the shadow of our affairs and difficulties become aware that this is indeed the gods' universe which divine laws do govern, and that nature is all friendly and humanity need not be otherwise. For there is no need for all this human quarreling and fighting and doubting: could we trust ourselves, we should trust our neighbors; could we trust our neighbors, we should trust the divine law. Then we should know that life is beautiful and true.

Fear is the basis of all discouragement. Only cultivate fearlessness in meeting the trials from without and the weaknesses within, and you cease to be alone. You attain discernment of a grand companionship ever present with you and become aware of the god "that is within you and yet without you," the Everywhere-existing whose voice you may hear, listening for it, in your own spirit, and no less in the murmur of the brooks and in the birds' chorusing. For the mystery in the heart of nature is also the mystery in the heart of man, and the same wonderful powers are in both.

The secret of life is impersonal love. It is impersonality that is our great need today; impersonality wins her secrets from the Mystic Mother. If we dismiss the idea of a personal God and dismiss our own personalities with all their limitations and misgivings; if we carry our minds beyond self into the limitless, our thought into the universal order, and from the inmost recesses of our consciousness regard the universe in its magnificence until, lifted out of ourselves, we recognize within ourselves greater things than ever we have dreamed of, and draw near to inspirations unendingly beautiful and rich; and make question then as to the interpretation of it and the meaning of all these limitless rhythms of law and order that throng the immensity of space — her answer will come back to us. We shall behold the universe as the outgrowth, the expression, of an infinite scheme proceeding from an inmost source beyond our comprehension — the fountain, the center, the unknowable absolute light — flowing out from which, following the plan of evolutionary law, passing through the many lives ordained for our growth towards perfection, we are here to work out the purposes of existence.

II — The Kingdom of Heaven

Godlike qualities lie sleeping within us, the spiritual things that mark us immortal, for here within the heart is the kingdom of heaven, and the only recompense a man needs is to become aware of his own divinity. It is there, a creative power within us, by whose virtue he who has patience to endure and work shall behold the fruit of his efforts: the human family glorified and brought to the goal his heart tells him may be reached.

An order of life shall yet be established by those who have gone through the schools of experience, birth after birth, round after round, until they have lifted themselves out of the strain and sorrow of the world in order that they might heal the world of its strain and sorrow; and their building will be of a new kind — a type of civilization higher than anything we have read of or imagined. The minds of men will expand in the atmosphere of universal brotherhood till all are orators, geniuses, wonders. Earth will give up its secrets and the stars declare the mighty mystery of their lives. Things of old unheard of will come from the hearts of men; we shall hear the answer to the pleadings of the advance guard.

How many believe it possible to establish the kingdom of heaven upon earth? The majority even of the so-called spiritually-minded carry their thoughts into far spaces when they think of it; yet it is here within the heart: it is in man, it is on earth, and we can come into it because we are part of the universal scheme. The grandeur of creation and all that vast quietude above us, the mysterious sublimity we look out upon, proclaim to us that which no man sees, none regards; and that *this earth is the paradise of God*, the place of souls or angels, the gate of heaven. Yet we have seen in the flowers and in the stars only that part of them which many have seen, and heard but what many have heard in the winds and in the roaring of the sea. There are millions of lights in heaven we have never caught sight of — there are millions of planets evolving — and wonders in the world around us of which we have never conceived.

Some day humanity will find a way of living more apart in the outer sense in order to come more closely together in the inner. Far from the strained, tied-up condition of our cities we shall be out always in her wide domains with nature, where her morning silences shall assure us of the presence of the divine. We shall walk with God daily and read the mysteries of the eternal in the lights of heaven and the blossoms of the valleys, and in every blade of grass by the roadside and every godlike attribute in man. What noble things we love now, we shall love more; what is beautiful to us now will be much more beautiful; the heights our souls aspire to, that seem now so far beyond hope of attainment, will be ours.

There is no limit to the possible expansion of human life and the growth of the soul — here on this earth which is the paradise of God and the place for souls to love and serve and grow in, working on and on toward the perfection of mankind. Nature is entirely beneficent; the universal laws that have us in their keeping are forever dependable. The god in us is always striving to bring us to that higher life which is lived solely to benefit mankind; the souls of men are calling always to the minds of men to listen, obey and be free.

The soul is not a thing to be set aside and, as it were, locked up for awhile and brought out upon occasions. It is that nobler part of our nature that rises to every situation and meets it with patience and courage — the power that often sweeps into a man's life unawares and carries him out beyond all brain-mind thought into the great broad road of service. It must be given breadth and scope and the large environment it demands.

The knowledge of it comes not in any world-startling or magical way and is not to be purchased save by the surrender of a man's passionate and lustful nature to the god within. It is a knowledge that steals upon us in the quiet of the nighttime and in all our peaceful moments, when we serve our fellows and ask for no reward but the glory that shines through the silence on him who has done his utmost and the peace of mind that is for those who are striving. Through our smallest actions it may enter: when we are at our best and in love with what is truest and noblest; when we are in despair, yet cling to our high ideals and dreams. Something comes home to us and we say, this will of mine is free that but now wavered and was surrounded and oppressed; I can look with perfect trust into tomorrow and into eternity.

It is a knowledge that must be evoked from within: each must earn it through his own efforts. It cannot be conveyed in words — the greatest of seers could not explain it nor the greatest of orators make it clear. Each must find within himself the light and the key, the fire and redemptive stimulation, making his mind free and receptive as the flowers to the sunlight, awaking to the glory of the morning and ascending to the mountain peaks of light.

But let a man seek it for his own sake, and all his efforts will amount to nothing. He must do it for the salvation of the race, aware that there is no separateness on the inner planes, that we are all brothers and our brothers' keepers, and that not until we get real knowledge of the inner self in ourselves can we interpret our other selves, our fellowmen. We must understand the delicate and intricate interaction and functioning of the different parts of our own being before we can claim understanding of the laws of universal life.

At any moment in every life the hour of revelation may be at hand. It requires no epoch or special season, nor the beginning or end of any outer cycle. In regions within ourselves where intellect is not, but imagination has full scope for its greatness, we touch the infinite off and on at all times and stand on the brink of vast possibilities and truths. We can draw upon resources greater than we dream of.

Imagination is not the peculiar property of men of genius and exceptional talent, but a power innate in

everyone, that which might help each to find his soul. It is the handmaiden of the god in man and our guide into that kingdom of heaven within, which is the realm of thought where the soul speaks to the heart and mind in the silent places of our lives, in the moments when we verge upon greatness, when an overwhelming consciousness comes in upon us of the universality of the divine life and of the divine possibilities latent in man; when the silences of great nature cry to us tidings of the god in ourselves and we feel the nearness, the companionship, of that which it would be presumption to define, but in whose universal presence we must tinge our thoughts and feelings with a certain solemnity, a mystery and grandeur, before the mirror of this infinite beauty — in the temple of this majesty — standing in an attitude of larger reverence . . . in silence.

III — The Song in The Silence

In silence we must stand, to gather out of that solemn beauty the joy humanity needs. Much more can be expressed through silence, always, than through speech. The inner life which is music — the overtones and undertones of the universal harmony — is only accessible in the silence. Music lifts for awhile the veil between ourselves and the unseen, the unspoken, the unknowable; but there is a music that cannot be heard, that the heart can feel and the soul realize and the mind reach to, so potent that it is without outward sound.

Before ever man was on earth, nature, dwelling alone in her beauty and secret mysterious power, felt the need of some grander manifestation of divinity and, as it were, cried aloud to the higher law to bring a new power into the world. In answer to her prayer man stepped into the arena of life — man the master, thrilled through and held and controlled by the divine spark, the spiritual center of his being. Then when thus the human soul was first incarnate here, out of its own inmost depths and out of the heart of the deep silences of nature a glorious song arose that swept and echoed through the universe — "The Stars of Morning sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy" — the soul of man and the soul of nature singing in harmony. And the song became assimilated with the silence of the stars and the mountains and the murmur of the forests and the seas, and has sung itself down since through all the reaches of time: its magical overtones, heard in our hearts, reminding us of our lost godhood, of our goal which is perfection, and of the unflinching courage proper to us as souls.

Only in the silent and secret recesses of our being can we hear it; only there can truth be fully known. When the outer senses are stilled and self-control takes possession of the mind, listening inwardly, one may hear the deeper notes of the divine melody. It works on inner and quiet lines, touches our consciousness here and there, quickening it to greater sensitivity.

Our outer ears are deaf to it because we have willed them away from hearing. Our minds cannot perceive because with our indifference we have rebuked the higher law and allowed the confused thoughts of the lower man, mean or doubting, to keep us in the shadows. Yet wherever we might be, in the darkest corner of the earth or the most beautiful, were our sense not dulled with the noise of the world we should hear the grand symphony.

Go back in thought to the time of your childhood when the world was beautiful to you, and such appreciation of the fullness of life came over you that your inmost soul told you of its own divine nature, and you felt in your heart the presence of God. You caught the sound, inwardly, of the mighty undertones and overtones then! To all of us such moments of revelation come; and if they pass quickly it is because our thoughts run so in the grooves of self and we hold our minds, which divested of self-satisfaction might become superb factors in the refashioning of human affairs, too often as if each day were eternity and our business in it nothing but to make trouble for ourselves.

As a child in the woods of my father's estate in New England I learned to love the silence. The fragrance of the pines and laurels was the breath of the Great Spirit, the love that brooded over all things. I felt as though I were some winged thing; at unexpected moments a master-power awakening within me filled my brain with pictures that came and went. It spoke to me through the silence of the pines, and when a bird chirped or a small breeze stirred the branches, the sound blended in my thought with infinity and became for me a message from the divinity within.

It all came back when I went up into those same woods again a few years ago. The old beauty was there, and

the feeling of the infinite life above and about me and the infinite presence I could trust: God that is all-beauty, the reality behind this world of appearances, the supreme beyond the range of thought "in whom we live and move and have our being." I never was so sure of the greatness of humanity, never so sure of myself, as I was then out under the old pines and oak trees with the sun shining down through the leaves and gleaming between the tree trunks on the Merrimac, until every ripple seemed sacred and a reminder of the warmth and glory of life. I felt through sun and trees and river the immeasurable joy that flows towards us forever through shining nature and her silence.

And then came a pang because humanity will not believe, since it does not hear and see and will not listen for the great song of life, and is shut out from all this sacredness and dwells exiled and oblivious in this radiant universe, its spiritual home, and knows nothing of the inward beauty, the symphonies that are yet unheard — knows nothing of the divinity that thrills through ourselves and all things.

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Chapter 2

THE SACREDNESS OF THE MOMENT AND THE DAY

Listen to the Salutation of the Dawn! Look to this Day, for it is Life, the very Life of Life! In its brief course lie all the possibilities and realities of your existence — the Bliss of Growth, the Glory of Action, the Splendor of Beauty. For yesterday is already a dream and tomorrow is only a vision; but today well-lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well therefore to this day! Such is the Salutation of the Dawn.

I — Fashioning Your Tomorrows

Let us conduct our lives as though each moment were the most precious in eternity: keeping an endless sacred festival in our hearts and living all the year in the joy of service to humanity. No day is commonplace if only we have eyes to see its splendor. With every nightfall a door is closed for the soul. Other lives and myriads of days will come to us, but never just the day that is ending: never that environment, those moments, those opportunities. They are gone, and long cycles of effort must be traversed before what they offered can return. This very day we can make or mar our lives. We can fill all the hours of it with such powerful affirmation of our hopes that they will become the world's hopes and the illumination of all life. No duty can come to our hands in it but will bring us the possibility of doing kingly service.

Hence the importance of our first thoughts upon waking. If one rises in the morning in a mood through which the soul can express itself, one is at peace during the whole day. Remember how great is the creative power of the imagination. Build up with it, upon waking, a picture of hope and joy, lay aside all that belongs to the lower self and, going up into the temple of the heart, dedicate the day to self-purification — and you invite an invasion of the gods. But rise with the brain-mind dominant and a day of perplexing difficulties awaits you.

Many of the greatest minds, in spite of all their knowledge, have come down in history as failures because they never found the inspiring light of the soul. Study the lives of writers, teachers, musicians, poets, inventors, and statesmen, and you will find how often, just when it seemed they were about to reach the heights, they faltered and failed because they had been straining the brain-intellect — living wholly in that side of their nature and ignoring the sustaining spiritual power. The brain-mind is apt thus to exhaust itself in research and vain endeavor. We lose our way when we turn from the path of spiritual discovery.

Others, again, advance to a certain point and then hesitate and fall away because in the limitation of their lower mentality they expect results at a certain time: they must have their rewards, as they must have their dessert after dinner, or they would lose their peace of mind. But the real seeker is indifferent to results, forgets himself altogether in the service of others, nurses in his nature the gentle and earnest spirit of justice, and treads the path carefully lest he should place one stumbling block in the way of those who follow after.

You ask, if I am divine by nature, why have I so many efforts to make and so often unsuccessfully? The answer is that it is a part of the scheme of life. We are born into this world that we may grasp our opportunities to assert the nobler side of our consciousness. It is the law that we shall ever be changing, ever growing: the soul's designs and the processes of its evolution move us, interiorly and otherwise, from condition to condition. The whole purpose of life is change, growth.

Some are burdened and aged by the consciousness of their failings. To me, to give way thus is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Remember, two things cannot occupy the same place at the same time, and of the two companions, either the angel or the demon must win; they cannot both be in possession. There is great danger for the one who in working towards his higher nature permits himself to dwell too long upon his failings — indeed, to think of them at all is a mistake and a sign that the courage is weakening.

Do not obscure from your vision the glory of your tomorrows by brooding on the gloom of your yesterdays! The brightest of us undervalues his powers. One half our battles are defeats because we have so cultivated

fear that we dread to undertake them. The human mind, conscious of its unworthiness, enters the path half afraid and with hesitation and is eternally looking towards the goal instead of taking each day as it comes with affectionate determination. There is a great lesson to be learned from these experiences: dealt with in time they often lead to splendid victories.

Life is a struggle and it should be: struggle is part of the divine scheme. What use would there be in living if we were born perfect? It is the growth of the soul, the unfolding, the effort to attain perfection, that is the incentive. The well-balanced know that every temptation is heralded in one's mind, and that no evils come up and press in upon us and force us to action unpreceded by the warnings and reminders of conscience.

So if you are looking for rest and relief and peace, or for the love of your comrades, find what you desire by giving it forth out of the treasure chambers of yourself. Thought is of little value unless it generates thought: by the power of imagination create within yourself the divine warrior. Begin to fashion your tomorrows by shutting out your yesterdays' weaknesses. Go forth into the day and its duties with mind open to the light and trusting in the god within, the divinity at the heart of things, saying of that higher self, *I will arise and go to my Father*, and to the lower, *Get thee behind me, Satan!*

There must be shadows, but we have the power to dispel them. When discouragement comes, and doubt and lack of faith, that is the time to bring imagination into play, to invoke the power of silence, to dig into the inner depths of one's own nature and discover there the beauty and grandeur of life, the glory of the law. Had we no difficulties we should make no effort. Had we no temptations there would be no need for self-control. Had we no trials there would be nothing to call forth our patience and trust. Trust in what? In those universal divine laws that hold our life in their keeping. They are there, and all existence is governed by them; and therefore those who base their living on law and order are on the path of progress whether they know it or not, and those who live without discipline are retrogressing.

II — Disciplined Methods of Thought

System, self-discipline, orderly habits: these are the things that set the soul free and allow the mind to gather such breadth from its experiences that it comes to see itself a factor in the infinite harmony of law-governed manifested being. We have to learn to conserve our energies if we are to do our whole duty by the world. How much we waste in a day for lack of this knowledge! How we talk ourselves to death on trifles and die of chattering long before our time! What scrapings, tearings, worryings, and confusion the poor brain-mind suffers where there has been no self-training in disciplined methods of thought. The time is coming, not in this life perhaps but someday, when we shall find it difficult to talk at all. Then what wonderful energies we shall conserve for use, in our own homes and day by day. We shall realize how great is the power that lies dormant in us and establish a royal acquaintance within the higher self. We shall no longer worry our brains into uselessness.

Stop worrying! That one habit has destroyed many homes and many nations and well-nigh shut out the light of the world. Stop worrying! If a cyclone threatens, do not be troubled. Let it come! Do what you can to protect your fellows, but for yourself refuse to loose hold of your trust. Preserve it especially at night. We cannot reap the real benefit of sleep if we enter upon it negatively, in ignorance, carrying to bed with us our fretfulness and dislikes, despairs or hatreds. To retire in the right spirit is to set aside the worries that have followed us during the day, to shut all doors that have invited us into realms of unreality, to pass into sleep resting on the true in a mood of utter trust in the wonderful law and mystery of universal life, holding within a clearly defined aspiration for a better tomorrow that we may wake fortified in the strength of the soul's majesty.

Learn thus to conserve energy and the days and moments become ever more and more laden for you with beauty and meaning, until presently the great flower of enlightenment will bloom. At first all may be mystery and a conundrum, but hold the aspirations at heart and the great ideals ever before you, and the knowledge latent in you will open to your search. You will take your position and find in due time the peace that brings with it perfect understanding. Remember that these minds of ours that do so much thinking and cross-thinking and twisted thinking, and lamentable thinking sometimes, are but instruments for the soul, the master of all music, to play upon.

Rest within yourself: do not depend upon another for your happiness. The moving away from the central source of one's inner life and from the duties near at hand has prevented spiritual growth in thousands and wrecked thousands of lives. It is by endeavoring to do the great things rather than the small that we fail to find and follow the law and to realize that our hearts are pulsating every moment in harmony with the finer forces of nature and the inexpressible vibrations of divine life. It is ignorance of these facts that causes so much unrest in the nature of man.

One of the greatest obstacles on the upward path is extremism: where the brain-mind has fashioned the way and the method, and worked out its comparisons and put forward its severe criticisms of life. There is always a danger in such cases of the dogmatic attitude, and of finding oneself in a rut instead of swinging far out into the universal thought and moving forward along the broad road of spiritual effort. The strain that exists upon the body and mind of the extremist is terrible. Though there may be no motive to do wrong or get away from the true, where there is that intense impulse to be doing something — to be getting a result without learning how or bringing about some quick action contrary to one's better judgment — there at once the whole make-up begins to deteriorate. In weeks perhaps, or months, something may happen that will cause its complete undoing. This extremism becomes in time a mania — a kind of insanity — and the brightest minds are often caught in the reaction.

Safety lies in keeping to middle lines. Do not look for phenomenal occurrences nor expect any startling manifestation through or for yourself. The divine laws do not work that way, but in silence in the inmost part of our being. One must not take a yardstick to measure one's spiritual advancement. And remember that if you drop a single note in a melody, the whole piece is spoiled. So it is in our lives: the perfect harmony cannot exist if a false note is struck anywhere.

A new life must come to humanity, else it will surely go down in darkness. We must be impatient in the knowledge that we have within ourselves divine potentialities and that to serve is to do what our souls long to do, so that all mankind may have glimpses of the blue of the future, and out beyond the shadows and horrors of the present behold the morningstar of a brighter day arisen. For we plow the way for the human race. We cannot move along this path by ourselves, nor advance alone towards the great peace. We may not rest in the joy of being blessed, for that is selfish, but by our devotion must bless the whole world.

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Chapter 3

DEATH AND REBIRTH

There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onward, there is reward past all telling, the power to bless and serve Humanity. For those who fail there are other lives in which success may come. — H. P. Blavatsky

I — We Know that We are Deathless

Theosophy shows the glory and richness of what we call death and how pitiful a thing it is that we should mourn for the dead, of whose immortality our very memory of them is a token and a sign that we shall meet them again. We are outgrowing fast the old idea of a personal God, and with it must go the concept that a man's soul enters this world newly created from such a deity's hands. We grow towards knowledge that in the great economy of nature a soul born here comes as a guest out of far realms in eternity — a guest of whose past we know nothing but that it has lived through the ages and abides here for awhile and goes. Whither? When we brood on that which is immortal in ourselves the answer comes back to us out of the living silence, and we know that life is eternal and death but a stepping forth into larger fields of life.

When one we love is so released we are given an opportunity to realize the majesty of the higher law, whose manifestation then is so close to us, and to turn our thoughts from the impermanent to the permanent and away from all that holds us to our limitations. There is indeed that in us which is mortal and has no place in the eternity of things. It belongs to this present life only and must be thrown aside at last. But deep in our hearts we know that we are deathless and that within us are the starry light and the wonderful places where truth abides. The external and fascinating attachments which we hug most dearly will fade away, but this bright and inward knowledge will never desert us.

None should be so immersed in his personal concerns as to lose sight of the time when he, too, must take his place in the silence. Many, working against themselves, spend two-thirds of their time seeking knowledge from this writer or that, and following fads and fallacies and absurd teachings, so that when the hour comes for them to shuffle off this mortal coil, they are wholly unprepared for the new life nature has in store for them. But it is possible to live as the flowers do, welcoming death when it comes as a change one has expected but has never learnt to fear.

Indeed, we should live twice as long as we do could we but rid ourselves of the fear of it, perceive that death is a new birth, know that it is life, and realize that it is joy. Looking forward beyond the present moment, beyond the end of our days, to vast possibilities and an endless succession of opportunities, we would become aware that one life is not enough, that the soul could do justice neither to itself nor to the universal plan without the large experience of many.

We might awake each morning in such self-forgetfulness that were death to visit us at noonday we should accept it with as much gladness as we do the smiles of the sun. On rising and before sleep, and indeed through all our duties in the daytime, we could hold to the idea that the higher laws exist — that they brought us into life and will take us out of it in a way more merciful than we with all our planning could devise — and we could go forth at last with broad vision and deathless trust, feeling only the beneficent glory of the change.

For though a man is hanged, or dies in the depths of degradation, that compassionate law that is a part of our natures takes command at the passing. Whatever his mistakes may have been, or his ignorance or his sorrow, there is an hour or a moment of glorious victory in what to our eyes seems the tragedy of death. It comes to the dying man when he feels that he is being released and, stepping forth into the unknown, knows that he goes not unprotected, not without companionship. For it is the knower, it is the great warrior, it is the eternal self that is there with him; and the soul arises in the power of its divinity and knows no fear or pain.

When the eyes were closed and the lips silenced, I have seen the light and beauty of a great illumination on the sweet faces of the dead. . . .

II — Passing into the World of Light

Though seemingly remote and unknowable, the higher law with resistless force guides man to the destiny he has carved for himself. As nature works in her unseen processes, so does the soul set free. Having gone forth it seeks its own, not at some point in space as the theologians teach, but in a condition in which, freed from the body, it may gain strength and knowledge: recalling in the silence its old victories until, having learnt the lessons they teach, it may put forth towards fresh experience and take up anew a tenement of flesh.

When we consider the mercy that comes to our rescue — cares for us in spite of ourselves, liberates the real self in us and allows it to move into the new life — we can soar above our worldly interests and enter into loftier activities of thought, realizing what a marvelous experience this change must be that brings such illumination to the disprisoned soul. Sorrow and tears come to us at a death only because we do not see the grander vistas of life, but have fashioned our minds in the dogmatism of the ages and let the habit of our ancestors rule us.

When a soul separates itself from the body, it does not immediately pass on. Its old surroundings hold it for awhile. It is aware of our pangs of bereavement, our mourning hinders its escape. The great onward march is before it. It is not what we knew here, but greater: all the limitations were from the brain-mind, which is dead. It would be forging upward, advancing and expanding. We do it wrong to hamper its flight. We should let it go free as the birds in the air, free as the law intended it should be. We should part with our loved ones without grief; with confidence, as though they were but going on a journey, watchful lest we drop our minds into a belief that there is death when it is only a rebirth that has occurred. Let our mental pictures be the reverse of sorrowful — bright with hope and music, beautiful with love and flowers — and I can almost see the departing soul sending back a benediction as it passes into the world of light.

Pulsating in the very air and in the silence about us are the prayers of the dying who passed into the unknown in the great pressure and agony of war. Those who died upon the battlefields, looking out on the carnage and pain: did they not die with a question in their hearts — as to God, as to life, as to the meaning of all they had suffered? I think they asked and waited for an answer, and waited in vain until they had made the change. And when they moved forth from their wrecked bodies, and found the light dawning and the veil lifting, the answer came: their own souls gave them the answer, the divine law revealed it to them. Man's divinity was made known to them, and his evolution through rebirth, and the path he travels that leads to perfection.

The aftermath of the battle was the glorious moment for them, when they glimpsed in the change from those slaughter-laden scenes a vista none of us can see. Going out from their wounds and suffering they sought the Light. They learned the secrets of death and many of the meanings of life and felt the infinite law near at hand. They will live again: reborn again, strengthened through their crucifixions, chastened in their struggles. They are now at rest in the immensity of space; for nature prepares a state of rest for us all where the soul looks back over the closed life and sits in judgment on its actions and omissions, and where it has the opportunity to prepare a golden beginning for the life next to come. This is my consolation when I meet those sad hearts who have lost their loved ones and are questioning.

III — The Urge of the Inner Divinity

There is a wonderful unity after the change. The dead are with us in a very real sense: they know our thoughts and feelings, and respond. In the essence of our spiritual natures, in the silent places of our hearts where the deepest and tenderest memories abide, a real communication takes place: not by words, not by table rappings, not by visions. The immortal being has gone forth — having shaken off the burden of the flesh and the strain of material life, it is soaring through the beyond — and we should not seek to call it back for the sake of our curiosity or heartaches.

Life is eternal. The soul exists after death as the sun after its setting; we ought not to feel that we have suffered loss. Though ears hear not and eyes see not and no outward proof remains to comfort our hearts,

there is that within which should tell us that in the inner life we are bound eternally to those we truly love. Anything that was true in their lives — anything uplifting that held them to us — still lives. We have with us now and always whatever was noblest and best in them: the memory of their example, the aroma of their highest aspirations.

All that belongs to us is ours forever. The bonds that link us to sister or brother, mother or father, husband or wife, child or sweetheart, were not made for nothing: to think so would be to insult the divine law. Somewhere, somehow, someday, we shall be grouped again with the absent ones we love. For we live through a lifetime, and sleep; and then are reborn and return and return. Consider the growth of the trees, that at first are green and beautiful and then gradually change and die down. There is that in them which governs their life — an intangible mystery and the essence of being. They are all in its keeping and because of it will grow green again, and be beautiful with blossoms again, and again will die down.

And how can man find his heritage without opening to his thought vistas in the universal, and bringing within his mind's vision knowledge of the immortality and the divinity of man? Let him seek aid of his imagination here, for imagination is the bridge between the intellectual and the spiritual. As the miner digs within the ground and works with the conviction that gold is hidden beneath, and pushes on with energetic perseverance in spite of all discouragements; or as an artist takes up his brush and at first begins to work with his hands, not mentally conscious of what he is going to do but, because of an inward urge and the love of the true and beautiful working within him and the hope to grow and the will to serve humanity, he feels his way into his work and opens doors into the inner chambers of his being, and those creative artistic powers which belong to the divine side of our human nature begin to live in him: *so must we seek for the god within ourselves*, the Man within the man, the immortal within the mortal.

I do not believe there is a human being who has never felt the urge of that inner divinity. It may have touched him only for a moment or a day, but sometime surely he has known that glowing warmth in his mind which made all things peace and hope there, and made life joy for him and truth real.

We have all had yearnings in our hearts that have never been satisfied and ideals we have strived towards and never attained. Great poets, musicians, thinkers, who achieve mightier things than their brain-minds alone could conceive of, are proofs of an old experience of the soul and suggestions of what divine possibilities lie latent in us. I never hear a great singer but I think: if intelligence and aspiration, training and the musical temperament, have accomplished all this, how much richer and diviner will be the tones when full knowledge is attained of the god within. With rare exceptions, I have never gone into a picture gallery and taken delight in the grand conceptions of the artists, but I also mourned inwardly because, even with the greatest, the inspiration comes but here and there. They catch glimpses of truth but do not fathom its depths. Their vision is momentary, a flash from the soul intermittently, in and out, and disappearing: the kingly balance is lacking which makes possible an even advance, majestic, with never retrogression nor veilings of the light, nor shadows over truth eternal.

Or again in music one hears the glorious measures, the divine rhythms and harmonies — and then the drop, the wavering and the change; and the strained mental effort becomes audible. It is all unfinished business and but a partial manifestation of the god in man: long and many lives would not be enough to bring us to the heights of consciousness ordained.

We are in our highest parts immortal. Our path extends into eternity — we are eternally growing, eternally advancing — and in the course of time by the laws of our being must attain perfection. Look out over this limitless ocean of possibilities, into the infinity of unending life; behold a constant moving forward, a superb everlasting effort towards ever grander ideals, a gradual elimination of every doctrine and idea that impedes the growth of the soul.

The human mind has not allowed itself a large enough view of life. The education we have had for so many ages has trained us to look at things superficially. We live in a little corner of ourselves and shut our eyes to the universal. How many a great thinker, weighed down by the incessant struggle for existence until his high ideals were forgotten, has lost his way through the loneliness of life; how many a great composer has died in the infancy of his efforts overburdened with the difficulties of the material plane and spiritually starved; how

many a great artist has been shut away from the noblest development of his genius: and all for lack of knowledge of the brightness, the power, the lofty destiny of the human soul!

IV — Sowing and Reaping Seeds of Life

The small mind may say, "I have had more than enough of life; I do not want to live again." But this is no better than cowardice and the attitude of the man who would sit down and neglect his duties and responsibilities and forget them. Belief in reincarnation inspires us to stand on our feet and hold our shoulders back and our heads high in superb confidence, because of the divinity of man.

To come into a nearness to eternal things we must have life after life, experience on experience. We must have known all sorrow and heartache, all agony and despair: it is the pressure of these things that is bringing us slowly to our own, so that we may find within our hearts at last the knowledge that passeth understanding, the peace that shall abide with us by night and in the daytime, through all eternity, and no less in our griefs than in our joys.

When you are overburdened with sorrow, heartsick to find the meaning of it all, and a moment comes when you move away from your mourning and close the doors on the past, and quiet and inward feelings arise in you — study them, watch them well. You may find evidence then of the mercy of the higher law and the compassionate friendliness at the heart of being.

There is no such thing as chance: divine law governs us. The ills a man causes he can cure, and the seeds of the conditions that oppress us now were sown by us in former lives. You may be suffering and in ill health, and have in memory no time when in this life you set in motion the currents of physical decay and prepared for yourself the trials you are undergoing. Is there no bright promise for you, can you not find new strength to meet life each morning, in the knowledge that as you are reaping that which you have sown, so you shall reap that which now you are sowing?

Were a man to die tomorrow in the belief that we live but this once, when death had come he would find himself enlightened and out in the great blue of hope. For to the soul in its passing, when the lips are already mute and the mind seems unconscious, a sure and certain knowledge comes. It understands how unreal the life just past has been, and that all its activities here were unfinished business. Memory for awhile is vivid and strong, spiritual light is thrown upon the path ahead, revelations come of what might have been and what yet is to attain. And the soul cries out for a larger opportunity, that in the light of the experience it has gained it may begin again — correct old mistakes, make fresh efforts, build anew with understanding. And with the aspiration comes the answer: in the divine economy endless opportunities are accorded.

V — The Brightness Beyond Death

All have had intuitions of the brightness beyond death, but we fail for the most part to hold fast to them. We remember our limitations and the world's beliefs and slip back into the old grooves of thought. Yet we might feel our immortality always, performing our daily duties in supremest trust, with fear and unrest laid aside and peace laid hold of in their stead: each one a light unto himself through this knowledge, influencing the world, momentarily banishing fear from human minds.

I was in the park the other day, tired and seriously disturbed by the many discouraging types of humans I had seen. But occasionally, on a pathway over the hills, I would meet a child or parties of children, and there was always something about them that told me of the inner life. They had gathered flowers and were carrying them in their arms and loving them in a way no older folk do. They felt the nearness, the beauty and sympathy of nature; their consciousness of self was lost in superb enjoyment of the greatness outside of themselves, and the silent angel, the divine companion, shone in their faces.

In all countries you find the children in springtime out in the wilds gathering flowers. They have not to be told to go — of their own impulse they seek the haunts of nature; and this is because they are growing souls, and the soul can find room close to nature to breathe and grow as it cannot among the disturbing forces of our artificial life. And I thought as I saw them: how easy it would be for all humanity if we only would take time

from the material things to live in the world of beauty and joy; to gather the flowers that bloom from the inner nature and the breathing, pulsating life of eternity. The first step is to eliminate fear.

Let us move out into the light of thought and trust life confidently! Let us rest in the knowledge that the law is mercy; and it shall show us in our waking and our sleeping moments that the old idea of death is a farce and that what seemed a monster waiting to destroy us is a benediction and the working out of our destiny.

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Chapter 4

THE IDEAL HOME AND EDUCATION

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul."
— H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*

I — Religion, the Greatest Reality

If we have not the courage to travel for our own sakes along the path that leads to perfection, let us at least make the way straight for our children. The soul craves for an education that develops the balance of the faculties: in which, while the material life and all that belongs to it are considered, the spiritual life is given its true place so that it may nourish in the mind a discrimination or intuition almost unknown today. Intuition is one of the many divine powers latent in us. It discerns, anticipates, and wards off evil, and is the eye, the ear, and the voice of the Christos in man. Only let it be aroused and the child will know its own divinity and live in the great surging wave of inspiration that life should be. All the obstacles that come of heredity or environment will be overcome in time through self-effort.

Children are born to be met with something better than the welcome they receive in even the best of homes. They come demanding a response to the yearnings of the spiritual part of their being which nothing material can satisfy; and parents cannot so express their love as to meet these deepest needs unless they themselves know what real life, spiritual life, means and can face its mysteries with reverent understanding. To provide a real education for one's children, one must make religion all in all — the divine inspiration of a true life.

Man is religious — is born religious, became religious as soon as he became man — and of all the realities, religion is the greatest. But we have to realize that in many religious aspects there are elements that obscure its trueness, and that to hold the minds of men within the limitations of a rigid doctrinal formalism is to crucify the soul, to insult the higher nature, and to contaminate and stultify the real or spiritual life.

Belief may be mere opinion, or founded on reason, or the result of inward illumination — a direct perception or knowledge. The world today is mainly governed by opinion. The ideas and teachings, chiefly ecclesiastical, of past ages have taken control of the human mind, and the shelves and departments of that chamber of thought have been so filled up with them that no room is left for the knowledge that belongs to the soul.

Obscurations crept in when the early Fathers, in trying to lift the people out of their materialism, adulterated the divine doctrines that had come down to them with the brain-mind ideas of a few intellectuals. A system resulted which was based on fear, whereas the ancient and true system had been based on trust. The masses were ignorant, and the half-instructed usurped authority and built for the future on foundations of falsehood. They gained control of literature and held it for ages, obstructing truth and creating absurd superstitions that have become ingrained in the fiber of our belief. Their first step was to teach humanity to substitute blind faith for its divine birthright of knowledge. The most important doctrine of all, that of the divinity of man, was left out, and in its place the misinterpretation was substituted that the divine spirit pertained to and was especially to be found in one man alone. If it were not in all of us we should not be alive.

The most cruel persecutions have been brought about always by religious intolerance which, truly, has its hands active behind the scenes today and works out its vicious life in ways we do not dream of. Creeds and dogmas, the easy refuge of the sluggish mind, put fetters on noble thought and obscure the principles of truth.

We come into the world trailing clouds of glory and with the light of our divinity shining on us, and then because of the education and environment that await us here, we are blinded though yet yearning towards the sunlight. The views we acquire are so limited, the goals set before us so petty and ignoble, that we begin to grow old while we still should be young, and to die before we reach full manhood. We live but a few years

before our whole thought is of death. The phantom fear is with us always, and yet youth in its richness and fullness might be found in life at seventy!

From the streets of our cities — from the most degraded quarters, the poverty-stricken districts, penitentiaries, insane asylums, hospitals — from home and civic life alike, we hear a cry going up always: that things are imperfect, that happiness is not to be found. Often those who think the most, think most away from truth because they depend on the intellectual — on certain books and "isms" and doctrines, what this one has written and that one has said. But the real genius and power of humanity lie not in these outward aspects of life.

We inhabit but the smallest part of ourselves and leave unoccupied those very regions in our being where the secret of right living might be found. Half-interest, half-heartedness, inertia, have shut away the life-giving side of us: we have left it deserted so long that now we have forgotten it exists. For lack of its healing influences humanity is sick and a festering vicious spirit has been nourished in the intellectual untouched by spirituality.

Science stands timidly outside the doors of truth and, thinking only of externals, ignores the invisible forces in man and the grand faculties of his spiritual nature. Yet we have hardly progressed even to science: few have gone so far as to base their lives and ideas on reason — and very few can go beyond that to illumination. But faith not born of illumination is not knowledge and arrives at no truth, and it is not blind faith nor even intellect that must govern things, but that inner force that makes us divine and gives us marvelous power to direct our own lives and human destiny. We must hold a funeral service over our creeds.

Theosophy enlarges the perspective and brings man to his own through conviction that within the heart and mind are all the factors necessary for the world's redemption. As we are mysteries, so we can be revelations to ourselves. Were a man to seek truth so earnestly as to find his way into his own soul, and discover its mysterious faculties and what armies wait there at his command, he would hold in hand the key to all situations and understand every need of humanity. Every secret of human nature would be clear to him.

Some demand that the soul shall be brought down and placed in the palms of their hands or they will not believe in it. As reasonably demand that the stars should be plucked out of heaven and analyzed! He who would grow and live in the golden light of truth must not ask proof of things spiritual, but knock at the door of his innermost nature, introspect, and find in his own heart the revelation.

For we do not live by philosophic or theological speculations about life, but by the knowledge of life we ourselves have acquired. Truth is not intricate and remote, a thing to be led to by much discussion. It is the reality behind all these outward aspects of life, the eternal purpose ever pressing towards manifestation, that which keeps the stars in place and mankind from self-destruction. We have always been taught after a fashion that we are immortal, but was there anything in the teaching that brought immortality into our conscious selves or gave us not faith but knowledge to live by? Intellect is not enough, nor are even morality and good deeds alone. To make any true advance we must lean upon the wisdom of the heart, which is divine, and have some trust at least in our spiritual nature, some assurance that in our inmost being we are incorruptible — that we have godlike qualities that can be brought into action and can make our minds the vehicles of an immortal self.

How can any earnest thinker deny the divinity of man? In everyone's experience there is enough to convince him that out beyond all we see and hear is a living pulsating power urging men on to higher purposes, nobler service, driving us in quest of a knowledge that would justify life and make its meanings clear. This is the ray of the infinite in us. It proceeds from the supreme central source of all; it broods over humanity and enfolds it. It is the teacher, the knower, the helper, the consolation.

Illumination cannot come until a man knows this — which does not mean, until he accepts its existence as a dogma or holds it as an opinion, but until he is aware of it *as a divine presence within him*. We must pass from opinion to reason, and from reason to this illumination, until we attain to seeing life as it is. The real man is a spiritual being, and the thinking mind must be guided by that which when manifested makes one whole. The lowest human being on earth today has still within him a ray of the eternal love, of God that is all-

beauty.

II — The Soul Belongs to the Immortals

Regard with unprejudiced eyes the opinions and traditions our forefathers held to be fundamental truths and one must see what limitations they impose. A married couple may be loving and devoted, blessed with every helpful quality an ordinary education can give and fitted in all exterior senses for the care of children, and yet, believing that man is born in sin and must depend on outside help for salvation, how can they know the meaning of the birth of their child and all that precedes it? How can they move out in thought to the higher states of consciousness and feel the brooding presence of the indwelling spirit and the mysterious approach of the soul that seeks entry into this world?

And when their child is born and nature has produced the tiny animate body they so tenderly care for, how many mothers realize that linked with that body, and to gain therein its necessary experience and advancement, is a soul (during infancy as it were asleep), the treasure of the gods come into their lives to learn from and to teach them, to benefit them and to be benefited? "The soul belongs to the immortals; the body has come to me that I may make it a temple of the living god" — how many mothers tell themselves that?

If we do not know what we need ourselves, how shall we understand the needs of our children? We look upon those dear little mysteries as something wholly our own, take possession of them from the very first and try to fashion their lives upon notions of our own, and forget that they are souls with their own rights and individuality. In what a hurry we are to push them on, to get our doctrines and ideas and devotions and feelings drummed into them! We love them and desire their advancement and indeed would suffer or die for them, but shut them in within the little scope of our personal concepts and ingrain our idiosyncrasies into their lives. We would make them a part of ourselves and hide from them that they are a part of the great life of the universe. In our very efforts to teach them, we hold away from them the grander lessons of universal nature.

You may have a home established on fair lines of understanding — with love, means, mutual consideration, a religious tendency, and a strong determination to build the homelife on the right basis — and yet there is a nightmare in that house, a specter that haunts the minds of the parents even before their first child is born, and puts its shadow over every thought of love and hope for their children that enters their minds. It is fear: fear of separation, fear of death.

In their solicitude they surround their children, as far as they can, with everything that physical life can give. They nestle them to their hearts and make great plans for their future — which, however, they foresee only in terms of a life of from seventy to a hundred years. They do not know what their children's destiny will be, nor if they are to see them again, nor when, nor how. They do not look towards the tomorrows of the evolution of the soul. The dogmas of the last two thousand years obscure from them knowledge which should be theirs, and though their love is born in eternity, it is marred and narrowed in its expression by the notions of the day. The economy of nature cannot be understood by those who hold that we live but once. They cannot see the breadth and scope of our human evolution.

Truth is always seeking expression: not in creeds and verbal formulae, but as higher states of consciousness in men. It is a profound sense of the solemn mystery of life that the mother-to-be should have, not dogmas based on tradition and faith and with no element of knowledge in them. The mystery of life must be understood or the unborn child is swayed by the influence, not of illumination, not of reality, but of mere opinion, and suffers a kind of starvation spiritually. It has come back, a stranger, to those from whom it has been parted so long, demanding a spiritual welcome and to be made to feel in the very first pulsations of its heart before birth the superb influence of truth — of spiritual truth manifesting as higher states of consciousness in the parents and fashioning their thoughts and actions in such a way as to build up for a child a life-vehicle fit for a soul. They have nothing to give it but the atmosphere of the dead opinions of this and past ages: no living truth, no awareness of the divine, ever-present and shining through human hearts and minds, only worn-out ideas that come down from unilluminated centuries, the theories and dogmas of an ignorant past.

How many mothers know anything of those sublime mysteries or prepare themselves for motherhood in any

real, that is, spiritual sense? Or with all their love and self-sacrifice can say that their every thought and action since they took up the sacred obligation of marriage has been based on the kind of knowledge that, having naught to do with opinion and utterly surpassing reason, inheres in the heart and in the soul, and pushing its way out into the life changes the whole thought-atmosphere into something divine? Their education has thrown them the other way: for generations we have been feeding, not on knowledge, but on blind faith.

And so the children are not rightly welcomed. Their lives are prepared for and started in an atmosphere of uncertainty, unrest, and before and after birth they starve for that spiritual light and peace which of right should belong to every human being — for it is the consciousness of the divine nature within each of us.

III — The Christos-spirit in the Home

To think of a man is to think of a soul: an inhabitant of eternity moving forever along the path of evolution, seeking wisdom and driven to seek it by a sense of his own incompleteness and a hunger for the fullness of his being. Only egoists are self-satisfied. The normal man feels within himself that longing for completeness which is the effort of divine truth to manifest through him. He is impatient with his own failure to understand the mysteries of life.

So we are often impelled hither and thither, and our course is zigzag from this thought system to that. Our policies in life are shaped by the psychological influences of the age we live in: by current opinions and the small revelations of science, or by some book that may be in great temporary repute. There is no growth for those who thus depend upon such ephemeral guides. Hundreds of mothers, while they are experimenting and experimenting and reading this or that on child-culture, or attending such-and-such lectures, are all the while depriving their children of something divine that once acquired can never be lost, that can only be acquired during the prenatal period and earliest childhood and only through the mother's knowledge of the laws, mysteries, and responsibilities of life.

If parents rightly understood these vital needs of their children, they would regard the subject of self-purification in a new way and make of their homes altars to purity. What is needed is a larger view of the meaning of happiness: this is the line of thought following which they might discover their true selves and begin the upbuilding of a better race. The world stands in need of mothers and fathers with clear, quiet minds, to whom the home is the sacred center of human life, where no disharmony is allowed to enter, where time is held too precious for many things that seem all-important to most of us, where duty to the self, to the children, to the race, is firmly understood and unflinchingly followed.

Let the man who goes to his club stay at home a little more! Let the woman who hankers after a wider experience face herself and make in the home, that is the shrine of her inner being and the inner life of her husband and children, that splendid change her heart yearns for! Her power, she should remember, is incalculable. True womanhood is always queenly and carries with it a force to shape all things for righteousness; and, on the other hand, many and many a man who has lost his faith in himself and in humanity must ascribe his loss to a woman. For a woman's power is all too often misapplied.

I believe in the equality of the sexes, but I believe that each has its own part to play. Woman should stand to man as the inspirer and helper. I hold that when she leaves the duties of her domestic life and gives so much of the best of herself to doing what she considers her part in public life, in making and affecting laws, she is leaving her home open to influences that presently will be beyond her control. It is a deeper, greater, more superb womanhood, asleep in the hearts of women today, that must be evoked.

Every other thing in life should be sacrificed to the advancement of the Christos-spirit in the home. Where the desire for it is, there the help will come. He who aspires to do a noble thing — and in his heart is reaching out towards it constantly, seeking the inmost sanctum of his being and desiring help and light — will get what he demands from the immortal source, though not by any special favor: the divinity in the soul always responds to the call of a mind open and ready to receive. That divinity is there, behind our daily consciousness, urging us forever to thought-flights out into the vast skies of truth.

We need to unfetter ourselves from creeds and dogmas, from bias and all preconceived notions, to step out

into the sunlight of each day with the confidence of the warrior and dare to think with a courage that breeds persistency as it goes and meets truth half way. The intense force of one soul and mind working in harmony with the higher law could change a nation in a moment.

One need not go away from one's own home to learn these things. Knowledge of them is to be found in the inmost recesses of one's being; and who finds it there becomes impregnable to external influences. When the soul has control over the mind, one is not satisfied with faith but must have knowledge today and more knowledge tomorrow, happiness today and more happiness tomorrow, until the very flowers in the garden bloom for one more beautifully every morning, and the birds sing sweeter, and the sun shines more brightly. For those who partake of this wisdom, and whose will is set to live this life, are fed at the Master's table.

IV — The Needs and the Wants of our Children

A home established on these lines would have within it indeed the kingdom of heaven. Storms might rage without — trials, poverty, struggles, tragedies, disappointments of all kinds, might assail its peace from without — but no matter how many or how great they might be, they could not daunt the builders of this home, who have heaven within, reflected in a homelife which is the expression of the higher law. Their children would be born into the wonder of the new happiness with which its atmosphere would be filled. Before the birth of each, they would make preparations for it in much more than the ordinary sense. They married understandingly, this couple, with knowledge of the laws of life: they were companions, and not merely lovers. A child is born to them, but their states of mind were fashioning its character before it saw the light. The influence of all the harmony, peace, hope, courage which they have brought into their lives was preparing for it a larger, broader path than is common, and an environment fit for a soul to live in; so that it finds itself after birth not exiled in this world but at once at home in its surroundings.

The great figures of history — the composers, artists, poets — have been harbingers of the greatness humanity may become; but theosophy aims to place before children ideals higher than inspired the greatest of them. These parents, from the moment their child can raise its hand in impatience or restlessness, will feel that its education must begin there in the sacred atmosphere of the home. How carefully they will fashion their thoughts and actions, how guardedly. Their sense of duty to the soul of their child, their love for it, is leading them out into a love for every living thing.

They recognize the complexity of its nature. Man, to take his rightful place in life, must understand that there are three factors in his being: the body and mind that are mortal, and the soul that is immortal — the body the temple, and the mind the instrument, of the inner god who is the soul. All three must be considered in education. It is not only that the body needs care, and that the mind must be trained, there is this new idea: the soul must be led forth to take its dominant part in every thought and deed.

They realize, then, that in their child is an immortal self, part of the great scheme of life: a mystery to and in itself because it has not yet finished the journey of its evolution. It is a spark of deity seeking expression, seeking encouragement, in order that it may become a living light in the world — that the body may grow into fullness of health and beauty, the mind into efficiency and keenness of aspiration, while the soul builds of the physical atoms and mental qualities there marshaled under the mystery of natural law a dwelling place fit for itself, a shrine for the living god.

They cannot and will not attempt to say when or where it has lived before, but they know — they must, if they would understand the child — that it *is* a soul, with a path stretching out before it into eternity, and a past behind it, eternal also, of which nothing is known; and that even now in its infancy it may be getting glimpses of the vast future and the beauty and glory of infinite life.

With such ideas they can never bring themselves to feel that the little animal body must be fed and indulged according to its desires. Too many mothers fail to discriminate between the needs and the wants of their children, with the result that before they know it the animal lower minds of the latter are governing the home. There is nothing of that sort here. You will not find the child eating sweets, or given food, between meals. The food it has at meal times is simple, nutritious, carefully prepared, and enough to sustain it during the day; and the parents would no more think of giving it more than that than they would think of giving it poison. It is

not allowed to build up in its body, by over- and irregular eating, the forces that would make for its body's undoing. It is taught in its earliest years to guard against the creeping desires that enter the mind, and a habit of thought is formed in this way that will last it through life.

The incessant clinking of knives and forks and clatter of dishes are not to be heard here. The mother is not forever wearing herself out preparing food, nor the father worrying about the bills to be paid tomorrow, nor is either overmuch concerned with the demands of the neighbors and of society. The spirit of selfish competition is not cultivated, but instead there is an effort to grow as the flowers grow, reaching up toward the sun: not spasmodically, not influenced by this or that fad or doctrine or the opinions of such-a-one or so-and-so — not influenced by anything but the knowledge that comes through consciousness of the divinity within.

The result is that their child — their son, let us say — is constantly gaining; constantly receiving, from the first, the divine touch and benediction of real knowledge, real love. The atmosphere of the home is opening the way for a more complete education than the world knows about today.

V — Building The Souls of our Little Ones

They know, do these parents, that nothing comes of continually telling a child to be good or it will be scolded or punished, that it serves no purpose at all. They do not believe that humanity can be saved by platitudes. Nor will they deceive themselves with such ideas as that *their* child is better than other people's children and cannot make mistakes as they do.

They know that unless a boy has the knowledge that will enable him to control his animal nature, he only half lives; and that it is pitifully useless to wait until that most difficult time when the strange mysteries of life arise in a boy's own nature and almost overwhelm it, and then to try to set him right with punishments and corrective discipline. That is not the time, nor are those the means. It would be well for us all to forget the harsh measures our unilluminated minds have devised for dealing with our children, who should instead be brought from the first into the sunshine of life and the music and beauty of those inner worlds their souls could tell us about if we understood the language of the soul.

The mother daily impresses upon her child's mind the fact that there are things he should and things he should not do, and though he may understand but little, the impression will remain and a sense of right and wrong will be growing. She treats him always with a view to making him strong physically and morally: strong to bear his karma. She is careful less to hold suffering away from him, than to help him suffer and unburden himself that he may grow. Always her thought is of his needs and not of his wants: of the needs of his whole being, body, mind, heart, soul.

This does not win from her a mere passing thought now and again: she has her hour of devotion each day, wholly given to it. By the time the child is a year old and not so helpless, nor his mind so undeveloped, as you think — he has lived before, he is sensitive to a voice all whose intonations express the harmony that can only come from the soul — that spirit of devotion so daily nurtured in her directs her to use music in his education: the kind of music, deep, pure, and beautiful, that will not set the little limbs jerking in response but silences their restlessness and quiets away every tendency to fidget. For these home-builders have studied music and know that it is, so to say, the voice of the divine soul in man; and that the very atoms of their child's body respond to its ennobling formative influence till the spirit of real music — impersonal, dispassionate, not to be soiled — grows into his life and becomes a part of it.

Then too she goes out with him into nature and shows him the stars and wonders of the sky, and teaches him to love the sun and birds and flowers and every breathing thing. And this not once a year or once in three months or only occasionally: daily she finds time to take him, if it is but a mile or half a mile, away from the rush and whirl of modern life with its selfishness and greed and inconsistency, and away from the judgment of her neighbors. Out there in the silence and the unspoiled places she wastes no time in catering to his wants and desires, however many kisses he might return for the giving: her mind is still and always on his real needs.

Childlike in her love, she goes out with her child into the domains of nature; and while his eyes are happy with the blue sky and the beauty of trees and flowers, and his ears with the birds' songs and the winds' whisperings, his inner self is being nurtured by and is reveling in the beauty of its own realm — that great nature to which he belongs, of which he is part. And all this is instead of shutting him up in some little kindergarten,* or sending him out in the care of some ignorant nursemaid, or tricking him up for show in fancy clothes.

*In the 1920s, kindergartens were equivalent to today's preschools. — Ed.

From this contact with nature the mother herself is no less a gainer than her child is. What she gains is as real, as spiritual, as the delight we get from poetry or music or art: an influence out of the silence of things, out of the quietude of eternity. She brings it back into her home, and it is there for her husband when he returns from the strain of his business: an atmosphere in which the selfish side of his nature finds nothing to respond to it, no nourishment; in which all his unrest is dissipated and dispelled, and his nerves are given the healing influences of deep peace. She brings into her home a benediction out of the depths of nature and of herself. She has discovered a system beyond that of any educator, and in this aroma of love and wisdom, sunshine and harmony, she finds the selfish desires of her child ever growing fewer and weaker because he knows within himself that what he is receiving is that which meets his real needs.

And so he grows from infancy into childhood, becoming no hothouse plant, delicate and fragile, but so far as his heredity and evolution permit forming for himself a thoroughly balanced character and preparing himself to go out into life with understanding and unafraid. You will not find him smiling one hour and crying the next — now delightful, interesting, and unselfish and then just the opposite; he is all the time evenly at his best, very quiet and full of sunshine. It is something basic that delights you in him — no precocity, nothing prodigious.

Thus the first four years are made the four cornerstones of his life. They are the setting for the whole of his future, on which it is built.

VI — The Forming of the Mind

Then the education of his mind must begin, since the mind is the instrument of the soul, the piano on which the master musician plays. But he must not yet be troubled with his A B C's. He must be taught something about the life of mankind. There must be lessons in history, but nothing that implies poring over books. He must not be pushed into booklore until he has been taught to feel that there is that in himself also which knows, so that he can look into a book cheerfully and with trust. His mother will begin by showing him colored pictures of the peoples of the earth and the flags of the nations till a sense of the bigness of the world is growing in him, and the idea of internationalism, and he has acquired a certain interest in the nations and a desire to know something about them, something of their languages.

By such simple methods she teaches him, between the ages of four and seven, to use his mind. His brain is not strained: she teaches him the greatest lessons in the very simplest way. "We do not live, dear," she tells him, "just in this little house, or town, or country; but in the great world, the peoples of which, though they are so different, are all members of the same family."

By the age of seven, too, he has been taught to realize thoroughly, not with pride or self-love, that his body is the temple and abiding-place of something more beautiful than can be told, for whose sake it must be cared for and governed and his mind educated; and to master the difficulties and overcome the wants that arise within him. He has built up his character and strengthened his will: is no saint, but is becoming quite natural. He will be prepared to meet when it comes that serious age when a boy stands confronted by the mysteries of physical life and discovers within himself the two sides of nature, and knows that the battle of his life has begun.

In all children's lives the fourteenth year is a most important one. The boy who has been allowed his own way, and to be governed by his wants, finds hell awaiting him then. The psychology of the age opens to him all possible doors of temptation. Often we see youth and the general appearance of innocence and so much

else that is promising that it seems impossible that the life should ever be soiled; and yet it is already soiled. Do not blame the children! They are ignorant of the laws of their being, and the last people they would think of speaking to about these mysterious trials and temptations and experiences would be their fathers and mothers. Doctors rarely touch on this subject and the children drift and drift, and you see nothing on the outside — only restlessness, peculiarities, appetites, passions.

But these parents, in this ideal home, have been behind their son always. They would almost as soon, in his childhood, that he should have seen crime committed as have read about it. Above all they have been infinitely careful what contacts he has made and what influences he has come under. Guests are entertained in many homes because of their wealth or social standing, without any proper investigation of their private character. All transgressors are not behind bars by any means. There are moral lepers, awful in their influence, among those, often, who pass as respectable and are prominent in the community — and one does not need to have transgressed in action to sin against the Holy Ghost. It is in the man himself, in his attitude of mind.

There have been no such invasions of this home. The mother and father have been on guard. They have stood behind their boy always: they have known his mind, they have protected him. And now that he is fourteen and has come into the time of perils, a certain self-directed effort is apparent in him — calmness, repose, a strength of character have grown up; he understands and controls his outer self. Perhaps he could answer no questions on this subject, because his knowledge is out in a larger field than that of words. But in the silence of his deeper nature he has an instinctive perception of the difference between right and wrong, and it is enough to carry him unscathed past the many temptations that unquestionably assail youth at that age.

VII — Pivotal Points in Youth and Manhood

He grows up. He does not allow himself to be deflected by ambition from the great purposes. The thoughts that possess his mind are those that come in from the soul, from realms where the god in him is king. His mind is attuned to eternal beauty.

He knows the value of time, the sacredness of the moments and the duties that belong to them. His nature is so frank and straight as to be, so to say, impregnable. Knowing that his mind is the instrument through which the soul must work, he does not burden it with trashy reading or dissipation. Nor has he overstrained it with study, nor made too definite plans for the future. His ambition is to be natural, to do faithfully each duty as it comes to hand, to achieve for himself a harmony of the physical, mental, and spiritual forces.

At twenty-one he reaches another pivotal point. He has learned a largeness of view by observation and sympathy: his outlook is no longer a boy's, but a man's. Yet he is no less hungry for knowledge than ever he was. Every day is a school of experience for him, and he looks forward, not to graduating from some institution and having done with it, but to going on studying and learning through this and all his future lives.

He has not been carried away by the first emotions of romance nor allowed his blood so to be fired as to compel him to assume responsibilities for which even in a material and financial sense he is not prepared. There is plenty of time, he knows, in which to work out whatever may be in his heart. Meanwhile he has to establish himself in business, and begins to do so — perhaps in a small way.

In whatever occupation he chooses, you will find him creating for himself an atmosphere. Everything about him is clean: no words are needed to say that some purifying force is active in him day and night which is only latent in most men. He cares nothing for competition, does not strive to push himself ahead in politics or as a leading light in his city, has no will to amass wealth at the expense of others — he has studied economics and realized what duties and responsibilities they imply, and has another view of things. He acts at all times calmly, following middle lines, and so daily builds up something of character — ought we not to think at least as much of character as we do of scholarship or intellectual acumen? He is not hastening things; he is satisfied to do his duty today and to be conscious tomorrow of having done it. And so, firmly based in right action — never to be separated from that — he stands in a sense as a god among men.

He is a thorough optimist. He could not be pessimistic because he has so lived as to keep his vision unblurred

and therefore sees life as it is, knows that these surface appearances are unstable and transient, and that the reality is the undercurrent which is not seen. How generous he must be, then, how free from condemnation, how compassionate to those who err, and tolerant of other men's beliefs.

Realizing that the duty of another is full of danger, he avoids the pitfalls that entrap so many. He knows that overdoing is in the result as bad as underdoing. He follows the lines of least resistance, aware that extremes bring reaction. He cultivates a spirit of cooperation, and it is all humanity that he cooperates with. He is trained to know the difference between the angel and the brute in human nature, and no matter how often he may have slipped or faltered, he has arrived at manhood a splendid type of man.

Now he steps out into a profession, perhaps becomes a lawyer — and, surely, a blessing to the state and to the nation because he is so clear in his conceptions of duty that he can interpret even the common law from the standpoint of conscience and justice. Or he may become a professor at a university, and there, because he understands that the soul is the real enlightener and the mind but the instrument of the soul, he is a light among the highly trained of intellect: a new type of professor with a new view of education as of life — and presently a new type of university, and then a new and better type of youth, must result.

Or he may go into politics and be sent to the Senate, there, with the knowledge that thought can be brought as low as hell itself by passion and desire or carried to the heights of heaven where the will is to serve humanity, to exercise the duties of a lawmaker. Or he may become the head of a prison, and with the bigness of his soul, his compassion and love of justice, work zealously for better conditions. And the young men behind bars and those who are waiting, perhaps, to be hanged — even the worst of them may find within the heart of this one young man a hope that all the books and sermons and all the laws have failed to give them, because the knowledge that is in him is real knowledge and behind it is the divine compassion of the soul.

VIII — Girlhood, Womanhood, and Marriage

And now imagine that a girl has been growing up under like influences somewhere — her parents also gifted with understanding of duty, her home also utopian — and that these two should meet and marry. Their courtship and marriage would be of a new order: something unknown in the world, sacred.

Real love is that which lifts one's nature above the ordinary and fills the soul with compassion. It is impersonal: a rounding out of the character under the inspiration of a lofty and spiritual kind of thought; a bringing of one's noblest possibilities into action through self-sacrifice for the sake of another. One who has loved in this way will know something, for example, of the power of imagination. We take nothing into our minds but it either expands there in its strength and beauty, or it deteriorates into vileness and decay. He who loves ideally, idealizes the object of his love; and if this be done seriously and wisely — the faults and weaknesses of the one so idealized at the same time recognized and withstood — it is a process that makes love creative. The idealization tends to become ever more actual, and the common stuff of human life is glorified.

The girl to whom love means this will not be tempted by a handsome face or a sympathetic voice, or by intellectuality or wealth or position. She will take no step until the right time, and when she does, will know where she is stepping. Hers will be a real marriage. Marriage when it is real is profoundly sacred; then no power on earth can break up the home. All the trouble is in the mismatchings.

The woman in the sacred home is not an unthinking drudge for the man, still less the ornamental plaything for his pleasure, but as it were the priestess of that temple and a sure link for him with spiritual things. So when this lawyer or statesman or teacher or prison worker goes back to his home from work, something divine is waiting in the atmosphere there for him. The children are brought up on the same principles as they were; but there has been growth. With this mother and father there is a larger vision than their parents had — more knowledge, wider experience, broader views and outlook, more facilities, better environment.

It becomes not difficult to look forward through two or three generations and see more and more utopian homes arising, more and more children brought into the world and educated under the influence of the soul-life — or to look forward through two or three centuries and see thousands of human beings of the new and

noble type going forth upon their purifying mission into the life of the world, all under the sacred influence that began in that one home.

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Chapter 5

THE WORLD'S CONSCIENCE

I — A Change of Spirit

To the world's conscience every humane mind must appeal in this hour of the world's dilemma. War is a symptom — the effect of an inner cause that began ages ago among those who were yet the creatures of inborn savagery — having its sole origin in human selfishness or fear, or both. Hence its cure and abolishment lie not in conferences more or less sincere or insincere, but in a radical regeneration of the human heart — a change of spirit.

This cure is not difficult or far away, or impracticable, but actually is the most real and most ardent wish of every normal man and woman. Nothing so stirs the masses of people as does an unselfish appeal directed equally to the heart and the intelligence. Response is immediate, universal and sincere to the last degree.

War could never arise if between nations, just complaints on the one side, and frank and honest defenses on the other side, were laid openly upon the council table, and a sincere and high-minded effort were made to obtain a peaceful settlement of the disputes. The party refusing to abide by such a decision or refusing to submit its case to a tribunal would be blackened and shamed before the entire world — a situation which no civilized nation would dare to face today.

Never in any case do the people desire war. Only when their minds are inflamed and angered by injustice — real and imaginary — does the demoniac war fever arise with its attendant train of shameful charges and countercharges, misrepresentations and slander, hate and horrors of many kinds. Let us determine to abolish from our hearts all moral trickery, all selfish grasping and advantages, all fear of our fellowmen, and war, even all fear of war, will dissolve away as do the mists before the morning sun. War will become impossible; for war is merely the effect, the symptom, the result, of inner moral weaknesses.

These are facts, and the remedy is always with us, sure and infallible in its results. Should disputes arise between nations, submit the case to neutral referees or arbiters — honestly, laying the entire case before them without reserve and unafraid — and then abide by their decision loyally and honorably. Can anything be simpler, wiser, and more sure? If we lose, then we lose; if we win, then we win; and in this manner we proclaim the justice of our cause and vindicate the national sense of honor before the whole world. Often has this been done with success, and bitter and bloody wars have been avoided with their horrible aftermaths, often as terrible, as history shows, as war itself.

When an individual refuses to submit his case to neutral and honorable referees, there is an instant presumption in all men's souls that his case is poor and unworthy, that he dare not lay it frankly and openly before the world. Nor do the frequently complicated conditions in international affairs differ in form or in fact from the frequently complicated conditions in individual cases.

II — War, a Confession of Weakness

War is a deliberate absurdity. It is a confession of weakness, and no frenzied rhetoric, or shameful accusations against the enemy prove anything other than that the case is weak, unworthy, and too frail for submission in a peaceful manner for impartial adjudication. There is the whole situation and also the remedy. Nothing can be urged against it except fear and greed. A man who truly loves his country cannot have two thoughts about it. A man who loves his fellowmen everywhere cannot have two thoughts about it. The remedy lies in our hands, in our very hearts, in the very role of right itself. Only phantoms oppose it — moral vampires, which feed on the very lifeblood of the race. What are these phantoms? Greed and fear.

Some people say that war makes for heroism, or creates it, and that prolonged peace enervates a people, which finally falls before a stronger and more warlike race. What mad reasoning is this! If such people are

sincere, I can respect their sincerity; but I cannot respect their lack of intellectual penetration or their lack of intuition. Both statements are utterly false. Merely the careful reading of history proves the contrary in both cases.

War is not a forcing ground of moral strength, of which heroism is but one single flower. War is in its very essence violence and brutality, and hence its influence is disintegrating, destructive, and brutalizing. Peace and civilization are the sole and true nursery of the noble impulses and of the heroisms that shine forth in splendor in times of catastrophe, moral or physical. Such occasional acts of heroism as shine forth in warfare do so in spite of war, simply because they were already in the nature which displays them and were put there by the sacrifices and sorrows as well as the lessons taught us in peacetime. It is vice and weak self-indulgence which lower and finally destroy civilizations. But these exist also in war times, only a hundredfold more unrestrainedly, simply because war time is a time of moral relaxing, hysteria, and mental and moral enervation.

Universal brotherhood — the keen realization of the spiritual and natural oneness of humankind — is the only key to a peace that will last, a peace of conviction and sincerity. Hundreds of examples can be found every day of the misuse of the highest principles, of the perversion of high ideals and great truths, of the planting of the seeds of dissension and the spirit of warfare among men, of the persistent endeavor of the lower forces to destroy the glorious work of brotherhood.

Unbrotherliness is the insanity of the age. It menaces in no small degree the progress of our civilization. Its power cannot be broken or destroyed until man has had ingrained into his heart and mind the fact that he is divine in nature, until he realizes that he possesses the immortal potentiality of good, that true freedom exists only where the higher law holds in subjection the lower. Not until he seeks to gain the ascendancy over his lower nature can he do his highest duty to his fellowmen, or be a brother in the truest sense of the word, or live in the freedom of Freedom.

Let us hope with that grander hope of the soul, the energy of right action, that the day is not far distant when the great sweeping force of love — of true brotherliness — shall encompass humanity, when the knowledge of right living shall be in the grasp of all and shall be lived in the truest sense of the word, when children shall be conceived and educated in the atmosphere of purest thought and grander action. Then, and not till then, shall humanity commence to build the solid foundation of a golden age and work in the kingdom of freedom.

Every lover of justice is making an appeal to the conscience of the world because war is a deathly curse to civilization. Is it ordained that children must be born to be sacrificed in blood as tributes to greed and power? Take warning ere it is too late!

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Chapter 6

ON SOME SAYINGS OF JESUS

What then is the panacea finally, the royal talisman? It is DUTY, Selflessness. — William Q. Judge

I — The Divinity Within

The Sermon on the Mount above all the interesting parts of the Bible always appealed to me as coming from a great soul, one who dared courageously and openly to show people the new way to live, the way to serve, the way to love, and the way to become glorious examples of human beings instead of failures or half-failures and disappointments. Jesus certainly knew the human heart and like many other great teachers of the past, his sympathy is so full, so profound and unselfish, so broad and compassionate, that it gives the basis of the spiritual education which everyone requires. If every man and every woman today would set about to see what life means, they would study the ancient wisdom and the teachings of Christ and other great seers. We find that Jesus taught to his disciples the esoteric meanings of the true religion, but to the multitudes he spoke in parables because they were not prepared to receive the deeper teachings. He spoke as did St. Paul, who said in substance: I cannot give you the meat or the great foundations of these truths, I simply feed you as little children.

Today we find that we have too many organizations, too many different systems of education, too many different systems of religion. What we want is something for us to do *within ourselves*. We need the key to the problems of life so that we may round out our lives individually and spiritually, so that we may feel the touch of the divine quality of our natures, that we may free ourselves from despondency and fear and doubt and unhappiness and sickness, and rise to a larger vision, with a belief in ourselves, in our divinity, in the divine quality within us. For verily we are the children of God. Nothing is lost in the divine economy of nature.

Consequently, if we become sidetracked, if we lose our way, if we forget the divine part of our nature and live just for today, the great universal idea of life is lost. But the moment that we can believe, as Jesus and as all the other great teachers of ancient days taught, that we are essentially divine, we shall recognize the greatness and the power we have within ourselves to build wisely, to build in such a way that our life will become a blessing to ourselves and to others. Then we can live in the vision of a larger life, in the eternity of things, in the consciousness that God is infinite, unknowable, all-powerful, all-compassionate, the supreme eternal source of light and life. But if we accept only the objective interests and the temporary things of life, we punish ourselves and lose sight of the greatness of the Supreme.

Let us picture to ourselves the meaning of human life, the mightiness of this life, its greatness and its joy. When we reach this point, we shall be able to live the true, clean, wholesome, noble life. The old Jewish writer in Proverbs was very wise when he said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." He meant that if humanity is to find the key to right living, it must get a larger vision and a deeper feeling of justice and of love for one's fellowmen: a greater consciousness and an absolute surety that man is divine in essence and therefore can make himself a power for good in the world. When that comes, the rest will take care of itself.

So we have to turn about and start in a new way. It is not enough to have great statesmen, great writers, great poets, great geniuses scattered around the world. We must all depend upon self-directed evolution, with pure and noble motives, for the rounding out of character and for becoming more nearly like what Jesus taught us to be. For did he not teach that "Greater things than these things shall ye do"? So follow the truth, the light, and find the god within yourself. Then you shall find the open way to happiness.

II — Reincarnation and Karma the Key

The teachings of theosophy are very, very old. They were taught and lived hundreds of thousands of years

before Christ. And if one follows his sayings, though there are very few preserved, one will find that he had the knowledge of something more than one life. There are a great many thoughtful people all over the world who believe in reincarnation. They have taken a broader and a grander view of life, and it serves them to realize more fully their responsibilities.

With unfortunate people — with the prisoner, the drunkard, the woman of the streets, and even the thief and the murderer — as soon as they hear of reincarnation, something happens. New hope is born in the hopeless mind. There is a larger conception of life in the one who has lost faith. There is a disposition to try over again and to become something better than before. These feel that there is another chance for them. But when one believes only in the one life on this glorious earth of ours, there is naturally a limitation in the knowledge of the meaning of life.

No one must believe of reincarnation that the soul of a man returns to the body of an animal. Such a teaching is irrational, as such a retrogression would contradict the fundamental maxims of life. Once a man, always a man. Reincarnation gives our conception of God's infinite plan a wide scope. It alone solves the problems of injustice and misery which brood over our world.

"As ye sow, so must ye also reap" is another of the tenets most strongly emphasized in theosophy. If we put our hand into the fire, we are burned. If we interfere with the laws of physical health or spiritual progress, we suffer. If we do not grasp our opportunities as they come to us from day to day with a high sense of duty and justice, we lose our way. Humanity is going its way in doubt, in questioning, in fear and despair, while the Sermon on the Mount stands out with the beautiful essential truths of all religions, accepting them but doing away with the forms that obscure them.

Find the key of right living within yourself — trust yourself more, believe in yourself in the higher sense. Find the strength of your own character; learn to love all that is true and beautiful; cherish high ideals and live for something greater than you have ever lived for before! Remember, every moment of human life is sacred. Begin before it is too late, lest you lose your chances in this life of finding the key to that knowledge which brings permanent happiness.

Jesus was a prophet, a teacher. It is for us to take his words, interpret them, take everything that is good and true and ennobling, and ingrain it into our hearts and our lives, so that we may lift the weight of woe from humanity's shoulders, yes, and make a new kingdom of heaven on earth, a new manhood, a new womanhood, and a new life for all. My whole aim is to open the way for the earnest investigator to the fact that when we take the utterances of Jesus and forget the dogmas that have grown up around his name, he becomes in the freest spiritual sense ten times more to us than he ever was before.

I have studied very closely the teachings of the Nazarene and of St. Paul. I am certain that Jesus was an initiate, an advanced theosophist; so was St. Paul. Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go onto my Father" (John 14:12). This is one of the most baffling and puzzling passages to students of the Bible. I have talked with many clergymen, I have read books of criticism on the Bible; but outside of theosophy I have never found the kernel of that saying.

In speaking of himself, saying "He that believeth on me," Jesus was not referring just to the physical man, as many might think. He meant that one must trust in the divine spark, the Christos-spirit, which is in every man. If we can see the greatness of Jesus' life and its promise for us — the seriousness, the joy, the splendor, the inspiration, and the eternity of life — then we shall take his words home to ourselves and begin to refashion our lives, no matter how clean and strong they are, nor how high they are already on the moral line. We shall have a new vista of life.

In those words he does not speak of himself as Jesus the man, but as the Christos-spirit within him. He knows that his disciples to whom he is speaking know very little about it, so he assures them in a way that one cannot get away from that "Greater works than these shall ye do." In this he acknowledges himself as one of the children of God, as we all are; except that he had moved farther along the path in his different incarnations, had experienced all states of life, and in his mercy and compassion for human nature he

simplified his teachings and brought them down to the comprehension of the ignorant multitudes of his day.

Then he adds, "because I go unto my Father." In my early years that verse was interpreted to me as meaning that he was going to die. But I interpret it as meaning that Jesus was going to his own inner nature, his own inner life, which is the kingdom of heaven wherein we can find the Father. Jesus, knowing that his disciples would follow after him, declared that greater things than the wonderful things he had been doing, they too should do. He did not say that he himself should not do still greater and greater works. He told his disciples that greater things than those he had already done, which they marveled at, they could do also. There is a world of promise in that verse, it contains a book of revelation.

Spiritually, the world is half asleep, just barely living. Opinions have nearly destroyed spiritual life. Humanity has not the substance, the foundation of spiritual truth. Whether we read the Bible or not, we can study the wonderful, silent mysteries of nature, we can read our own hearts and the mysteries in our own natures, and we shall find that sometimes we are the angel and sometimes the demon. Life will continue to throw us about, and we shall remain wrecks on the shores of civilization, until we have made a part of ourselves that one great splendid truth of the essential divinity of man. It is the keynote for the reconstruction of humanity. It is through no magic that you can gain the conviction of your own divinity. I cannot give it to you. You cannot get it from books; but you can find it within yourself.

Let us remember that the stars are held in place by law; that we walk on our two feet; that we have intelligence and we have the great wide world to live in. We have the voice of the ancient wisdom in our midst, and we cannot get away from the challenge that it holds out to every man to look within and find himself — the real man. Unhappiness, sickness, and despair cannot disappear in a moment — the laws of evolution will not permit this — but we must be ready to take the first step on the path of self-directed evolution understandingly, remembering what Christ speaks of in that verse, that greater works than these shall we do.

III — Take the First Step

Think of the mercy of the divine law — of the great supreme source of light and life. It has everything in the universe in such perfect order that it cannot be changed. Man must accept it. So when sorrows and disappointments come, if we can be conscious of the bigness of life, it will be more to us than all the riches in the world. Friends may desert us, honors may leave us, but never, never will this inner treasure of man depart once he has grasped it and begun to live it.

It is not supposed that men will be gods in a moment or in a generation, but there is one thing all can do, and that is to begin to walk the path of spiritual endeavor, to climb the mountain that leads to the accomplishment of those greater things which Jesus spoke of, to begin to go to the Father, to begin to know what that divine spark within means. Something new will come into the life — a tenderness, a compassion. Everything in nature will become more beautiful and of greater value, because the aspirant will find himself akin to it in the truest sense. We are all a part of the great and wonderful family of God.

All these things that puzzle and annoy us now — all the weaknesses in our natures which we try to suppress, but do not control — bob up in unexpected moments. Self-conquest is what we must have. Self-conquest can never come until man is conscious of his power to conquer the weaknesses in his own nature, until he has found this precious boon, the divine part of himself.

No matter how much parents may love and care for their children, their children are still mysteries to them. Many do not stop to think that evolution is going on in the right way, or else disintegration in the wrong way, from the time their children first breathe. And if all the parents' time is given to looking out for their children's material comforts and pleasures, and the children are deprived of the knowledge which all nature teaches — the knowledge of their own essential divinity — we shall continue to have human wrecks and disappointments, mis-matings and mis-marriages, all along the way, because one mistake leads to another.

It requires no money, no books, no prayers (in the ordinary sense of the word) to put ourselves on the path of self-directed evolution. But we must challenge ourselves. If we cannot believe this with our poor, narrow

brains, let us at least imagine it, for the repetition of the thought carries with it a psychological power which will enable man to begin to accentuate his inner divinity. Divinity is in every man. If it touches our hearts, it will thrill our blood, it will create new atoms even in our physical bodies. Let each man say to himself to start with: "I believe that man can bless or curse himself. I believe in self-directed evolution; I am going to try it." As soon as men eliminate those prejudices, those former opinions of the personal, punishing, and revengeful God, of heaven and hell, and of being born in sin, then the light will shine in the heart.

Fathers and mothers, look again into the eyes of your little ones and you will see there that divine ray shining! But if you have no understanding of their real nature, if you do not believe in their eternal future, if you do not believe that this life is just one school of experience that they are going through, you will only see their pretty bright eyes. But it is the soul you must seek — the soul within yourself, the soul within the hearts of your neighbors, the soul in your children. Seek that, and in the course of time you will do the greater things than Jesus did. You will find that the glory of the divine law lives in men when they can recognize it and bring it to fruition. Then the higher life begins for humanity.

Jesus said "in my Father's house are many mansions," he was talking in metaphors, in symbols. He was not referring to a material house at all. If one interprets it as meaning that in the great universe there are many stopping places, many stations in life, many states of mind, many conditions of living, many different schools of experience, it sustains the idea of reincarnation: after the soul goes out from the body, then there are different conditions along the way. If one accepts this, one gets a broad view of truth and of life.

So this mansion that he speaks means the great universe, where rests the eternity of life. It means this wonderful power of evolution, which each one of us possesses. We have it within ourselves. The knowledge of his own divinity is the key to the wisdom which man must have in order to direct his life, to dare to live and think, and to keep his conscience so strong and so pure that he will become impregnable in the face of temptation — yet temptation itself is a horrid word. It is not temptation but ignorance that we must fight. If we know the truth, know our power, know our heritage and the potency of our inner natures, there are no temptations.

We must have some conception of the greatness of life before we can amount to anything. Consider the different conditions in life which Jesus referred to when he said, "In my Father's house are many mansions" — many conditions, many growing places throughout the great universe. In man alone we find a higher and lower nature — two conditions in one man's life. When man is overshadowed by his higher nature, he is growing; but when he is overshadowed by his lower, mortal nature, he is disintegrating.

Being a mystic, Jesus had some of this inner knowledge. He had evolved through his different incarnations to a position of much trust in the Supreme and of great love for humanity. His early life was said to be very sweet, true, beautiful, and aspiring. He was forever seeking knowledge, and so he later joined that wonderful society of Essenes, that body of noble aspirants for spiritual truth which the worst tyrants and despots were unable to condemn. This body of people lived together, but they did not believe in marriage among their own members. They were celibates. They knew that marriage must exist among the multitude; but they were preparing for the spiritual life, preparing to become teachers. It was with these people that he associated himself, and this association with the Essenes explains many things in Jesus' life, and will clear up and drive out of the minds of the present generation many of the old dogmas that had no place in Jesus' teaching.

IV — Human Duality

It is not God who punishes us but we who punish ourselves by transgressions of the divine law. If we put our hands in the fire we burn; if we take poison we die; and so in things of the spirit: we are the makers of our own destiny. And yet humanity loses faith in itself. It is bowed down with a quality of fear that takes the incentive out of life and tears the heart to pieces, limits the vision, and deprives us of something that is all our own if we will only seek it, if we will only reach out for it, if we can take the deeper meaning of Christ's teachings.

Ignorance is the key to crime and insanity, ignorance first as to the real nature of the physical house in which the soul lives. Every right of the tenant of this house is abused. When children come into the world, they are

waiting for that which belongs to them as souls. That is what they must have if they are to grow and become what we hope for them. But before they are eight or ten years of age they are under some special system. They are taught the fear and punishment of God — these are the things that the world's children are still being taught. And something more must come to our humanity if we are to hope for its spiritual resuscitation.

Just look at the newspapers! Every year records an increase of crime — of unnameable crimes. I read only the day before yesterday of a man who had killed twenty-five or twenty-seven people! The report stated all the gruesome details of how he had killed them and enjoyed doing it. Do those who are attempting to handle his case know how to meet that disease and that crime? They will probably be satisfied with the idea that the man must be punished — hanged or put in a cell for the remainder of his days — the mercy of God absolutely forgotten when they forget that which they should know.

If people are still ignorant, they have nevertheless had plenty of opportunity of knowing that man is dual in his nature. The soul of a man is the eternal, growing, burning fire of divinity; the other part belongs to the desires and the passions and the animal side. Unless the animal man is governed and controlled, it will know nothing about the many mansions in the Father's house. It will just grovel in the mud and die like an animal. And that's the sort of things we read about every day in the newspaper; but we read about so many of them that most of us are used to them, and so we dismiss them from our minds.

One of the great obstacles which prevent men and women from knowing the truth is indifference, and back of indifference one will find insincerity. When one meets insincerity or when one meets ingratitude, when one meets a human mind that will strike the friend who has helped it, one may be sure that he is not dealing with the soul, but he is dealing with the lower, selfish side of human nature.

But it is the knowledge of the higher self, of the divinity within, that I am ever seeking to bring out. It was the great message of H. P. Blavatsky, of William Q. Judge, and of the wise theosophists of ancient days, to awaken people to the realization of their spiritual opportunities. Remember the opportunity lost may never come again! We are not fatalists; we are the makers of our own destiny. You may be without companionship; you may be alone in your misery, in your disappointments, your despairs; but when you have these truths in your life, they are the treasures that will take the place of everything you most yearn for. They will be the key to longer, happier, and more useful lives along the path of spiritual unfoldment.

If we can get a new conception of God, if we can conceive that in the great universe there are many conditions, many experiences in different lives on earth and in different stations of life, we can commence to build a hope for ourselves. But when we pinch ourselves down to the idea of having only seventy-seven or one hundred years to live out the aspirations of our souls, we are cursed with the psychology of false teachings, no matter who teaches them. Do not blame those who teach, for they know not what they do. Yet the old dogmas that have come down through the ages, divorced from the essential teachings of the Nazarene, have warped the spiritual nature of man and twisted his mentality.

In spite of this great whirl of chaos and confusion, some soul occasionally springs up in our midst — a great artist, a great writer, or a great teacher — and gives us a glimpse of something beyond, a touch of the divine things in life. But we do not allow them to stay with us, and when they disappear many of us think they have gone forever. In these attachments and affections which we form for these splendid and beautiful things that come in life, let us remember that there are in the great universe many houses, many centers, and that we are the children of the universe, of the great supreme God, and our opportunities are many.

But if we do not take the first opportunity we may lose the second; and if we lose the second, we may miss the third, and so on. Listen to the voice of your conscience, to that part of your nature that is higher than the reasoning faculty. It is your spiritual nature, sleeping often, but at times springing into life. Keep it alive; let it warm your heart, let it fashion your thoughts and your life, let it make your home many times more pure and true than it is at present! Let it help you to make better laws for your fellowmen, and to fight with all your soul against war and for eternal peace!

We must begin to work for the purification of the human race by placing it on a basis of understanding, that it may no longer dwell in the realms of ignorance, but move out understandingly each day, learning more and

more, each experience bringing us the purifying, uplifting, and helpful knowledge that we need. It is glorious to keep on climbing to the heights through self-directed evolution. We must find that something within us, that higher nature, which every man and woman possesses — the Christos-spirit that is awaiting our recognition.

The best books in the world alone cannot satisfy you when you place yourselves on the true path, for you will find the kingdom of heaven within. You will find a supreme love of nature. A larger affection than you have ever known before will grow in your hearts: those you love, you will love better; those you serve, you will serve better. Oh! the glory of the truth shining in the human heart, according to its development. Today we are but children sitting at the feet of the Master; but before us in another life we shall know more, and in still another life more yet, until the glory of God will shine in our hearts and purify our lives. That is the state of perfectibility which men must seek if they would find true happiness.

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Chapter 7

THE LOST CHORD IN HUMAN LIFE

Theosophy is the thread which passes through and strings together all the ancient philosophies and religious systems; and, what is more, it reconciles and explains them. — H. P. Blavatsky

I — We Are All Sons of God

For centuries humanity has been taught the letter instead of the spirit of the Bible; hence the unrest, the questionings, and the controversies of today. The wisdom which Jesus taught was the ancient wisdom known long before Christ was born. It was the misinterpretation of the Bible by the early Church Fathers that led to its being accepted according to the letter, so that the so-called Christian nations have ever since acted on the principle of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, instead of following Christ's simple injunction "that ye love one another."

Today we have a repetition in some respects of the conditions and environments which the early Church Fathers had to meet in their efforts to establish the Christian religion. Of course there were not quite so many divergent doctrines then, because there were not so many people. But there was a great deal of antagonism and discussion and even despotism all through the first few centuries of the Christian era.

During the confusion of thought of those early centuries there were a number of great philosophers, perhaps wiser than we today; and there were others who were waiting for the light and who were, through the influence of the Church, breaking away from paganism — and yet they were not ready to accept the doctrine of the atonement through the crucifixion of Jesus nor were they ready to accept him as specially born. Think of the variety of opinions and of the contradictions about the question of the special divinity of Christ. According Jesus' teachings, we are *all* "sons of God" — we are all essentially divine. We are immortal, we are a part of God, and God is in us and we are in God.

The only difference between Christ and many of those around him was that he recognized his inner divinity. He evoked from his own nature a splendid compassion. It should be remembered that in the sacred legends of many nations, far preceding the time of Christ, there were highly enlightened souls, advanced men — and women too — declared by their associates and disciples to have been of immaculate or virgin birth. We should not interpret these legends literally and thus degrade and materialize them. The idea of the virgin birth should be taken symbolically, as meaning that Jesus was pure and undefiled in the spiritual sense and had achieved spiritual knowledge through his own self-directed evolution, while physically he was born of an earthly mother and father.

This is a page from universal symbolism which will help all to interpret many of the teachings of the Bible, which the early Church Fathers misinterpreted. The Church Fathers doubtless felt that making their Savior supernatural, rather than admitting that he was simply a noble man of very spiritual attainment, would be a telling point in gaining converts, and that the spread of Christianity would thus be greatly accelerated. Moreover, the Jews had a legend that the Messiah was to come upon the earth. This we interpret as meaning the Christos-spirit — a breath or wave or influence of the divine teachings which Jesus later brought to the Jews — would take possession of the hearts of men. But the Church Fathers accepted the coming of the Messiah literally, and a certain number of the Jews declared that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah.

Have we not arrived at the time when we must learn how much is to be found through self-directed evolution, through applying the teachings of Christ and of all the great world teachers, through belief in our divine heritage? Thus we can strengthen our characters for larger issues and larger service and for a more noble and exalted expression of the higher law. Considered in this light, we may understand that the coming of Christ does not refer to the coming of the man specially born, but to the spirit of the Christos in men, reflected in their spiritual exaltation to a state of understanding and discrimination and possibly of inspiration.

We, too, are all in our soul-life born of the spirit just as Jesus was, but it is a question whether humanity as a whole has cared for the soul-life or the spiritual life. How much thought do we give to the idea that we are united with God, that we are in God and a part of God? If this were not so, we would not be here. Take these few ideas and work them out to your own satisfaction. You will find many such ideas in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky: *The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, and *The Key to Theosophy*.

II — The Earnest Investigator

The earnest investigator of spiritual things must begin with a determined will to follow the path of spiritual endeavor until he finds himself in a higher state of consciousness which reveals to him the true life. When we give sincere thought to our own nature, and challenge ourself in the true spirit of aspiring to a better life, we have begun the climb. The second step brings to us in the silence of our own inner being a touch of the universal life. This alone is a splendid philosophy to follow. Our own soul tells us that we are a part of divinity — a part of God. But we are also a part of the great human family; and the only way to reinstate and restore the primitive teachings of the wisdom-religion is to live the life which Jesus and all the great spiritual teachers of mankind have taught us to live.

Disappointments, heartaches, sickness, bereavement, persecution, count for nothing if one will hold to these uplifting teachings. All things that seem such a nightmare upon humanity would pass away if we would rise in our spiritual aspirations, in our trust in the divine law, and feel the glory of God permeating our natures enough to make us strong and purposeful in will, full of love for humanity, full of pity and forgiveness, full of the spirit of service to all humanity and, above all, full of protest against the evils of the age. There is in every man and woman a spark of the divine life — the soul. That is why life may be made a joy and a glory, no matter in what situation we may be found. We must sing the song of Life is Joy, we must make a new picture, a new vista for the world, if we are to stem the tide of disintegration with a spiritual hope that will never die.

There is physical unrest in every human being, for none of us is living rightly: physically none of us is living up to the best. When we are not ill or in physical distress, we are apt to forget that this body is the temple in which the soul of man seeking expression lives, and the instrument through which God manifests as far as divinity can be expressed in man. We forget these things and pile penalties upon ourselves by carelessness and indifference. And then when sickness comes we are cowards. The majority are getting ready to die when they are forty or fifty.

Think of the world peopled with a glorious humanity with the light of spiritual knowledge shining through them! In spite of the disintegration that we see all about us, the eternal light of truth is burning, the light of the ancient wisdom. Under the pressure of a great thought-wave, a spiritual wave which cannot be fully explained, humanity will also be reinstated, will be restored to its rightful heritage and will find its real place in the universal scheme of life. Sadness will be turned into joy, tears into laughter, suffering into happiness. Then we shall have the true higher education — education for the souls of men and for the development of a noble civilization.

III — For Those Behind Bars

If one were to investigate the condition in some of our jails and penitentiaries, one would find that the inmates are often treated as though they were not human. This I cannot understand in view of the fact that for the past nineteen centuries Western civilization had professedly accepted the gospel of the Nazarene. It may be claimed that the treatment of prisoners is much more humane than it used to be, but I say frankly that most prisons today are hell-houses and unfit for even the worst specimens of mankind to be in. Those in charge of them are often simply trying to perform their duties as best they can, but it is a terrible reflection upon the so-called Christian world and upon our present civilization that these things are as they are.

How soon humanity forgot what the great Nazarene taught. It seems not to disturb many when they hear that a man is to be hanged, electrocuted, or gassed. A few may shudder for a moment, and then the tragedy is forgotten. Unbrotherliness is the insanity of the age and it is crippling the spiritual advancement of the world. Yet the essential teachings are in all religions. It is the presentation of creeds and dogmas in place of religion that have led humanity astray. The teachings of the Gospel have been ignored. The recent war was a proof of

it. Christ's teachings were brushed aside in the interests of material gains. No civilization can advance in spiritual knowledge under such conditions.

It would be very unwise and very unbrotherly to say, "Down with the churches!" Let the churches stand; they have good in them. Let those who believe in the churches sustain them as long as they can. But never allow the teachings of Jesus himself to be misplaced or misunderstood. Hold to all that is good, true, and beautiful, and eliminate all that is false and misleading. We must use no violence to cause destruction, but rather cooperate and build up.

Man is essentially divine, truly the son of God insofar as he allows the godlike qualities within him to rule his life, as Jesus did. How I love to talk to prisoners, and take out of their minds the woe born of the idea that alone in the blood of Christ is their atonement. He never said anything to that effect, and it is not so. Out of the tangle and confusion of all that has been said by different writers, after a while something in our own natures will rise, if we believe in the essential divinity of our own souls; and we will find the lost word, the lost chord — *that* within us which has the power to heal and comfort the hearts of those who are despairing. I think, as civilization advances, that it is the duty of every human being to be tolerant and patient with his fellows, for thus we help them truly.

I dare not condemn the man who is condemned to die — perhaps for some monstrous offense. I believe that there is a remedy for the crimes of the world; I accept the duality of human nature. When a man commits a crime, it is from the lower part of his nature which he has not learned to control. I dare say that civilization is partly responsible for it — that the greed, the insincerity, and the crimes that shock us do not belong just to those who have made the mistakes which have brought them behind bars. They belong to the whole race insofar as the race has done nothing to better conditions. And one cannot better conditions much by telling a man that God, the all-powerful and all-loving Father, first creates him in sin and then condemns him to eternal punishment unless he is saved through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Suppose a man has committed murder and I had the power to have him pardoned. Do you suppose I could make a saint of him? Certainly not! There are the laws of evolution to be considered, and karma. But it does not mean that a jealous God punishes a man for his misdeeds: *the man punishes himself*. If I put my hand into the fire, it burns. So I learn not to do it again.

But what do I know of the man who is condemned to be hanged? What do I know of his heredity? What do I know of the thoughts that were present in the minds of those who were responsible for his birth, even before he was born, during gestation? What do I know of his lack of knowledge, his lack of the proper home life? Nothing! I only know that he is a soul; that every man must have a chance to evolve, and that because he has gone so far astray he is in greatest need of the light. He does not need coddling or anything of the sort, but he does need an opportunity to redeem himself. He must be told that there is still another chance to begin to undo the wrong that he has done. And if the laws of the state are to redeem the unfortunate, they must be made so merciful, so true, so strong, so helpful, and so Christ-like, that such as I speak of will be looked upon as invalids — not only sick in body, but sick in mind — and will be treated as such and prevented from doing harm until cured and proved trustworthy.

IV — The Duality of Human Nature

In the Ancient Mysteries, the inner schools of the pagan religion, there was the teaching of the higher and lower natures in man — the great secret without which the contradictions and inconsistencies in human nature can never be explained. On the one side there is the immortal man, the soul, imprisoned in the house of flesh and made manifest only by noble actions; and the other, the animal, brute side of human nature, to be mastered by the higher and transmuted into a more spiritual life.

So when you read of a man who would walk out of his way to avoid treading on an ant hill one day, and the next day murdered his mother in anger, think of the duality of human nature. Normally his spiritual nature manifested itself in so small a thing that he could not tread on an ant hill, but the next day his lower nature — that part that loved money more than truth, that yielded to passion and vice under certain circumstances — forfeited his right to freedom of intercourse with his fellowmen, who were acting at least half rightly, because

he killed another.

Where is our Christian sympathy when we see men put in prison? Some prejudiced mind might say, "Shall we have murderers at large, ready to kill us?" Not at all! But we should have schools that would furnish education of a quality that would stir the minds of the most obtuse, the most indifferent and blinded. The advent of such schools should be met as a great gala-day. We would not permit the state to carry out the old Mosaic law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, which Jesus denounced. We would have educational institutions instead of prisons for those moral invalids.

If the man we speak of had been brought up to know his divine nature and how to follow its guidance always, and that his lower nature, the other part of him, must be conquered and made a willing servant to the higher, he would long ago have learned self-control. But as a rule children are allowed to grow up without knowing anything about why they are here or about their own natures and very little effort is made to teach them, for the average teacher himself knows very little about these most important facts in life.

The process of learning self-control must begin in childhood. From the moment a child, no matter how small, raises its hand to strike, its will power has begun to act, and that will power must be directed along right channels. What education did that child have in a former life? What does it know of its reincarnations? What does it know of its potentialities or its possibilities? Parents do not realize that by allowing the child to be mastered by its temper or its desires, they are cultivating the very conditions in that child's nature that may lead to crime and the penitentiary later on. The child is never told about the duality of its own nature, but should be.

I love children. I think home is sacred and motherhood divine. But no matter how strong the mothers' hearts, how full, how loving, how self-sacrificing, they have not the necessary knowledge. They do not know themselves. The first thing that every human being and every child should know, is himself. Study the laws of your own being and you will know the laws of the universe.

Fill your lives with dreams and pictures of the possibility of self-conquest — not repressing the tendencies of the lower nature, but overcoming them. Begin this process with the youth. Think what fair flowers of manhood and womanhood we can develop in the light of spiritual self-mastery! Think of the beautiful home life we can build which is not within our vision now; think of the humane laws we can make for the benefit of humanity; think of the educational institutions we can have of the highest order in every city, town, and village in the world, for the youth, for the parents, and for those who make mistakes — institutions governed in true knowledge of man's possibilities and potentialities. Truly these words, "Love ye one another," are filled with the spirit of the heart doctrine, the great hope.

Think of the torture that we inflict upon a man who has made his mistakes — no matter how serious they were — by continually reminding him of them. That is the idea of reformation, so called, that is usually practiced: keep him thinking about his sins! But what say you of taking that man and telling him that he is an invalid, that he is ill, that he needs care, physically and mentally. Give him his moral physician as well as his physical physician. Drive out of the minds of human beings the thought of legalized murder and of punishment! No matter what the man's crime we are not privileged, we have not the right, to destroy human beings. Why, we should not even strike a child, or a horse or a dog, because our conscience should not allow us to do it. We have just enough of our spiritual nature awakened to bring us to the realization that every thought has an effect for good or evil, and that we can bless our life or we can curse it by our thought-life as well as by our actions.

I see men of twenty and even forty going along the streets of our cities, with their hands in their pockets, heads down, and an expression of lamentation or carelessness all along the way. Go out on the streets, if you will, and look at the young girls! Out of the first hundred that you see, pick out one, if you can, who has received that light of self-knowledge which should be preached in every Christian church in the world. How many have been taught the full meaning of the words "as ye sow so must ye also reap"? How many people go through life constantly showing the spirit of love and forgiveness and gentleness and tenderness?

Oh, how I pity the mothers and the fathers! And how I pity particularly the working people. The mother has

her love of virtue and her love of right and home and of everything that is beautiful, but she must struggle along with her family. And sometimes she sees one of her children go out of the fold — it is awful, it is terrible, it is cursed; it is a thing that civilization should be ashamed of.

In spite of these menacing dangers, in spite of the tragedies that we read about in the newspapers, the crimes — more than we have ever had before — there is in the hearts of men the fire of spiritual aspirations yet burning. But none can bring to these I speak of the answer to their heart's yearnings. They must find it themselves. They will find it if they really work for it, and if they do not work for it they must take the consequences of the immutable law of karma.

We cannot have true religion, we cannot love, we cannot do noble service, unless we have a right royal enthusiasm. From my experience in helping prisoners and unfortunate women, I have found that there is only one message that I can take to all who suffer and who are despairing — those who have lost faith in God and man. There is nothing that will answer the yearnings of their souls except the truth. They should know that in spite of their errors, in spite of their mistakes, in spite of their being condemned and considered helpless, they too are the children of God insofar as they will turn about and make the divine laws a part of their lives.

Think of the man who is about to be hanged, who hates the world, hates humanity, has no belief in God nor in anything — just a brain-mind and perhaps a beast in the flesh; and then give him this message! I can assure you that if I had time I could recount my experiences with some of these men. I have seen them walk out of the death chamber already redeemed — redeemed through their own heartaches, their despair, their disappointments, and finally redeemed through their trust in the supreme, infinite, omnipresent power that holds us all in its keeping.

This is one of the reasons why I am so intense, so earnest, so eager to clear away some of the obscurations of truth that are holding men down. We must warm our hearts in the knowledge that there is no outside power to save us, but that it is we ourselves who, through our own self-directed thought and the consciousness that we are a part of the divine laws, must work out our own salvation. This must be done by opening our hearts to the heart doctrine and to the love of God in the truest sense — by making life beautiful in our simplest acts of kindness and of brotherly love, by leading a clean, noble life.

Jesus was one of the many great spiritual initiates who have come down through the ages. If we could study some of the hidden manuscripts of the past, we would find that there were many like him in degree, many who had won their greatest battles in self-conquest. And perhaps in the humblest walks of life there are those who have had no opportunity to step forth but who are living the life of self-purification, who have faith in their own divine natures. And in spite of the chaos, the unrest, the uncertainty, the deceit, the greed, and all these things that come from man's lack of recognition of his higher self, we can have a hope that will be so eternal that it will stay with us all through our different lives, and bring to us added courage each time. On such foundations we can build so beautifully and so royally that we never will be satisfied with the limited knowledge of one earth-life. Never!

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Chapter 8

OCCULTISM, THE SCIENCE OF RIGHT LIVING

Behold the Truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the temple of Divine Wisdom. — H. P. Blavatsky

I — Genuine and Counterfeit Occultism

It is very pitiful that everywhere the word occultism has been so misused and misapplied. Fanatics of every kind, and half-crazed people who are endeavoring to introduce some newfangled religion, have interwoven into their vocabulary and their teachings the word occult. Theosophically speaking the word occultism simply means the science of right living. It belongs to ages ago, when people had no creeds, no churches — when they lived closer to nature, when they preached, believed, and lived the science of life.

Surely thoughtful people are not yet satisfied with their comprehension of life or with their comprehension of death or rebirth. Just as long as our heart is yearning and aspiring, we may be sure there is something more for us. But when we can aspire and learn and gain the knowledge of true theosophy or the science of living, then we will begin to rise and go forward on a new basis of real occultism; for we must have something substantial to depend on if we are to meet life and meet death with any degree of peace and satisfaction. We must have something more for our children, something more for posterity. We must seek that which our hearts are calling for.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who in the 1870s brought the teachings of theosophy to the Western world in modern times, never claimed that she had originated these teachings. One of her strongest declarations was that theosophy accepts the essential teachings of all religions. How many people are there who can draw the line between the essentials and the nonessentials in life? How many think that their wants must be met, and forget that if their needs are met, that is enough?

One must not judge theosophy by the ridiculous idiosyncrasies and madness of pseudo-theosophy. Real theosophy, as H. P. Blavatsky taught it, is the most practical teaching in the world. It offers every human soul the key to the real meaning and purpose of life. It teaches man whence he came, whither he goes. It explains something of the divine laws governing the universe. It demonstrates that one life on earth is not enough for the evolution of the soul of man.

Theosophy does not limit God. It makes that great supreme power infinite. And if God is infinite, can we make him finite, personify him, call him revengeful and name him as a punishing God? No, we cannot. Think of the great supreme source of life that holds the stars in their places, that orders nature and its wonderful mysteries, that gives to mother and father the sacred privilege of parenthood — think of these and then tell me who can limit the universal, supreme Deity! Who can attempt to limit human life? At your best moments, at your silent moments, when either by despair or joy you have been moved to a state of contemplation, of analysis, of questioning, of yearning, think a moment: have you not sometimes almost felt the touch of this divine power in your longings and in your aspirations? Think what it would be if the human mind could be ever conscious of the fact that man is part of the great, central, spiritual life, a ray of the Supreme!

There are many aspects to truth. When Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," surely no one will think for a moment that he meant his personal self would be there, or that he meant his intelligence or even his own soul. What he did mean was the higher quality of

spiritual life, which is ever awaiting recognition in us — a ray of the Supreme, which holds man in his place, and the stars in their places, and which brings the spirit of justice to earth, ultimately. It is the Christos-spirit in man; it is that wonderful, indescribable something that comes to all of us at times. Perhaps it can be best understood as the highest conception that we can reach of the idea of love. How many in the world today can describe love? Look at the different aspects in which it is presented. Sometimes it is degraded in a way that makes it but a counterfeit of love. But where real love begins, when it is true and unselfish, we may know that it belongs to all eternity.

II — The Science of Right Living

As we step out on the broad path of research, with a disposition to forget our selfish selves and to live for others, with a desire to make the world smile and rejoice while there are so many aching hearts, to do our full duty to our mission in life, then we shall be living the occult life. Thus we shall begin to know the science of living, thus we shall begin to climb, and within the compass of one earth-life we shall know that we are evolving.

One of the great secrets in the science of life is self-directed evolution. If man will recognize his own soul and feel its power, he will know what self-evolution means. Is it not time that an earnest effort were made to adjust the affairs of the world on something more than a merely intellectual basis? It may make us smile to see men in their egoism, acting as though there were nothing above the intellect. But let a man rise in our conventions with a knowledge of occultism, and strike the needed note of peace and universal brotherhood — then we shall see the power of the science of right living!

The world belongs to humanity, the soul of man is eternal, his destiny in a sense is as fixed as the stars, if he will turn his face towards the light, if he will respond to that indescribable, pulsating something — that spiritual urge in his heart. No man, no matter how he has failed, has ever completely lost touch with that certain quality of tenderness and gentleness and nobility which is the eternal part of him, though it may seem lost; and if he does not find it today, he may find it tomorrow. So the hope, the grandeur, the superb optimism of the psychology of true theosophy is just what the nations need today.

This does not mean that the churches should disappear, but it does mean that every human being shall have the right to think

for himself and to give his own soul a chance to live. Suppose for a moment that I am on the wrong path, that my plan of life has no basis: is it not safer to take this view and fashion the life according to it, even though it might be fallacious, than to go on as the world has been going for so many centuries — man separate from his brother, families inharmonious, nations at war, suicide, vice, crime, and despair everywhere? We must be up and doing, we must clear the way, we must dare to think more deeply and to work more unselfishly. Preaching without living the life is entirely out of place. Unless the heart-life is behind it, unless we can have the daily consciousness of becoming better, of growing nearer to the great universal life, we shall know little of occultism. Let us depend on the intellectual life just so long as it keeps us free. But remember that the intellectual life of man, great and necessary as it is, is but the instrument of the higher nature, the soul.

III — Practical Occultism

The sooner we can find that there is this eternal center within us, the sooner shall we begin to know ourselves. I have worked among criminals and unfortunates ever since I was sixteen years of age. They have lost faith in themselves, they have lost faith in humanity, they have lost faith in their God. When they lose these, they lose everything, and their godlike qualities and that divine ray that is in them cease to be active, though they may be there. Then the whole lower nature is bent on revenge, on all those dreadful feelings that arise from the selfishness of human nature.

Further, man being a part of God's great family, it is only the body that dies, with its passions, weaknesses, and its idiosyncrasies. In a sense man's body is as sacred as his soul,

for it is the house in which the soul lives. Consequently the life must be clean and pure. Then when the soul

passes out, the body goes to its own, mixes with the elements, continues on its mission in different physical expressions. But all that was noblest and best in the life is still there, and as the released soul goes out into its new birth for another school of experience where it may evolve and grow, it loses nothing; it is not lost.

Here let me say a few words of warning. There are some people who claim to remember their past incarnations. Now according to the best knowledge that I have, and according to all the ancient teachers, no one knows what his last incarnation was. The physical brain, which is the organ of physical memory, dies with the body. Only that part of the higher nature which is needed for the soul's development goes on with it. It is like the flowers. They blossom for the summer and then die; the next summer other flowers like them blossom from the same essence, but not the same flowers. And so it is with the soul. The soul goes on its way.

I had one experience which was a wonderful revelation to me. I have been under water and was supposed to be drowned. I went under three times before I was pulled up. If I had never known anything spiritually, my soul would have gone out joyfully to the wonderful state beyond, for during that experience, when I was brought back to my normal state, I had lost all love of this life, for the revelation of death was so beautiful. Imagine the state of the soul that has fashioned itself at its best in one life, when it goes out — the revelations must be unlimited. As we have lived so shall we receive.

Think of the wonder and the joy of the soul freed from the tired body, in harmony with the grand symphonies of life! Of course these grand symphonies are sounding all the time, but we have not the ears to hear; we have not yet developed a conception of the spiritual things in life. But they exist. There is a wonderful symphony of life beyond the grave. I do not hear it, I cannot hear it; but I can conceive of it because the real soul-life is beautiful, is wonderful, is teeming with joy which every man can have when he has courage enough to face himself, to challenge himself, to find his own soul, and to begin to climb the ladder of self-directed evolution.

It is the aim of my Raja-Yoga system to produce, above all, balanced characters — *raja yoga* means the perfect balance of all the faculties, physical, mental, and spiritual. It is the teachings of theosophy applied to the problem of education. Please remember that *raja yoga* is not *hatha yoga*, the very antithesis of *raja yoga*.

Great educators have said to me: Could you not give us the secrets of the success of your Raja-Yoga system? And I have answered that no one can give them to you, all the money in the world cannot purchase them, for each pupil is treated individually. We give to each the necessary environment, the right atmosphere, the proper example; and we aim to bring out from each child its own soul-qualities rather than to weigh down its brain, its intellect, with our own intellectual attainments.

Of course the pupil gets enough of intellectual development in our school and college. More than that, while this is going on, while the body is being preserved and strengthened by proper diet and exercise and a clean, wholesome environment, the mentality holds its balance. Why? Because the child is taught its responsibility from the time it can speak. This may seem a mystery, but it is true. It is taught that it is a part of the great universal life. It is never punished; it is never reprimanded as most children are. But it is corrected and reminded and encouraged.

When the pupil reaches the period between fourteen and sixteen years of age, when most parents think it is time to send their children off to college, our Raja-Yoga pupil has learned when to say yes and when to say no. He feels that he is a part of this eternal life. This gives a sense of responsibility. It goes with the environment, with the example.

Under the Raja-Yoga system of education music is a very important factor, for real music is an attribute of the soul. By cultivating music in the child we can help to bring it up in accord with the natural laws of life. In this way we have sometimes made musicians out of pupils with no musical heredity, who in the beginning were very backward in their classes. Yet *we* do not make them musicians. The music was in their natures, and we have simply helped them to open up their natures.

Theosophy does not interfere with one's duty to his family or anything of that sort. It simply gives one's mind a rest.

In our daily duties, our disappointments, our heartaches, and our trials, remember there is nothing so grand in

life as a superb motive continuously sustained with our love and spiritual devotion. It is the breath of the soul. If one will cling to the pure ideals of theosophy, one finds a constant companionship in its philosophy of life. It is not purchasable and it cannot be taken away. It applies to every department of life.

I often think, if all the marriages that have taken place in the last hundred years could have had behind them the law of occultism — if every man had felt his responsibility from the soulful and divine side of his nature, if he had realized the potency and the sacredness of marriage, and if every mother, too, had been prepared in the highest sense — can you not conceive that the issue of such as these would be a better humanity than we have today? And yet even with its weakness, humanity is still splendid in many ways.

In the rearing of children parents should at least feel that it is their bounden duty to give as much care and love and opportunity to the soul of their child as they do to the body and the material side of life. Give the child a chance for spiritual growth, open its mind for the higher education, abolish fear and punishment! Never allow a shadow of the lack of faith in life to cross its path. Make life a joy — in your mind and in your imagination, if you have it not in fact. Have no disharmony in your home life. Build up your home-altar on a new basis of spiritual growth, as well as mentally and physically. Do this and you need have little fear for the future of your children.

Teach children the laws of physical health, to keep their bodies pure and clean. Realize that some of your children's difficulties may be inherited. Teach them to keep their minds pure that their lives may be clean. Remember that their lives are in your keeping and that imagination is the bridge that links the mind and the soul. Use your spiritual will and your imagination in continuously picturing your children as advancing along the path according to your highest ideals and your most sacred hopes. I cannot conceive that any artist ever painted a beautiful picture without first imagining it. I cannot conceive of any musician composing or performing grand and masterful works without first playing them in his imagination.

We must use common sense and keep ever in our minds the ideals of a beautiful manhood and womanhood for our children. Try to live close to your highest ideals and your spiritual will, and after a while you will become so imbued with these ideals that you will discover a new way to educate your children. Through occultism, the science of right living, you will afford higher education for your children. For the sake of coming generations, for the sake of what is noblest and best in your natures, find and follow the path of occultism. It leads to endless joy and peace.

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Chapter 9

DEATH, THE TWIN SISTER OF LIFE

I know I am deathless.

I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass, . . .

And whether I come to my own today or in ten thousand or ten million years,

I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait. . . .

And as to you Life I reckon you are the leavings of many deaths,

(No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before).

Births have brought us richness and variety,

And other births have brought us richness and variety. — Walt Whitman

I — The Conviction of Immortality

There is something higher than reason. There is a conviction that will come to the soul of every man, if he seeks the light, through his intuitive knowledge of the great spiritual truths — a conviction based on the eternal verities, something that will never leave him, something that will never desert him. No matter how poor he may be, no matter how much he may have suffered or what he may have to endure, this conviction will stay with him all along life's journey to illuminate his path for greater effort towards spiritual progress.

Man is essentially immortal; for though he lives in this world and adapts himself as best he can to the outward conditions of life, yet there is within him a great inspirational breathing force which comes from the central source of life. No limitations, no yardstick ideas or intellectual criticisms, can touch it. It is the love of the Supreme — that great, royal compassion which we know so little about — that we need. And more than this, it is the breathing essence of life.

When the body is tired and one has to lay it aside, that spiritual breathing life ceases in the body. And then according to the accepted standards of modern times, death follows. But it is only the mortal body that dies, the tabernacle in which the soul lived. But that eternal, living, breathing, spiritual force out of the Supreme, out of the ages, lives on and on, carries the divine soul, the ego, through different schools of experience in different earth-lives to higher states of consciousness and service.

Reincarnation is the key to new hopes and new ideas of life. It is the brain-mind, the merely lower intellectual part of us, that holds us down in ignorance. We have fettered ourselves, we have bound ourselves, we have shut ourselves in. We are in the clouds of thought, we are in the shadows of doubt; we have not the great vision that we should have — the highest expression of life — consequently human life is distressingly disappointing.

Reincarnation gives a true view of the greatness of human life. We go to school in different earth-lives — indeed, we are still children, and some of us are very blind and very stupid. Some of us may be endowed with intellectual attributes and scholarship of a high order, we may stand out before the world as literary lights, or we may shine in the scientific world. But what do these things alone count for in the evolution of the soul?

Yet of course right education means growth. If one is rightly educated, his mind becomes more receptive. He has a different view of life. His whole nature goes through processes of refinement and growth. But these are so temporary unless there is something deeper and more permanent behind them, above them, and in them, of a spiritual quality. There must be this knowledge of human life, of eternal life — this knowledge that every

man has within himself a ray of that great compassionate and infinite love centered in the Supreme, no matter how unrecognized it may be. None are forgotten; all are within the fold.

We are here to grow and live and work in consonance with the infinite laws. But if we know not these laws, we live in ignorance. No matter what we may think or how we plan or how much we may aspire or how great our ideals, we cannot change these infinite laws. A man may die tomorrow believing in just one life, he may have led a conscientious life as far as he knew, but when he awakens in the new life, finding himself released from the worn-out body in which he was held for necessary experience, he will know that he is out in the great broad vision of endless life.

In the divine economy, at some time between living in the body and the spiritual man moving on to this other new and higher life, our souls shall have a larger growth in a state that is similar to the condition we are in when we go to sleep at night — just as the flowers and the trees bloom at one season of the year and then at another they too go to sleep, and then in the springtime they come forth again. The same essence is there all the time, but not the same aspect. And so it is with the soul of man. It springs up and goes out and then finds its place in consonance with the infinite law, for all is harmony on the inner or spiritual plane. And it gravitates not through ordinary will power, not through desire, but according to the mercy and justice of the divine law.

No one is ever lost. This is the mantram that is with me, sounding in my ears all the time, when I talk to the prisoner in jail or in the penitentiary, when I meet the unfortunate woman on the street, the drunkard, and all those who are discouraged and tending to despair. This is the beautiful message that theosophy brings to them: another chance, another chance! For all men are of God's great family. They may have erred, but they are still protected by the infinite laws. There is always another chance of moving towards the true, clean, and trusting life — in conceiving or insouling a promise of better things until the better things come — until finally man has earned the right to happiness, even though obliged to work hard in the objective world.

One may falter today, one may fail, but tomorrow there is another chance. Again one may falter, but there is still another chance. The higher law is like a great loving mother-heart. Remember, a mother is never discouraged with the weaknesses of her own. She is forgiving and loving and serving. Now if a human mother or a human father is so, can we not conceive it possible that our Eternal Father has within its compassionate, loving law something more than this one pitiful, discouraging life for man on earth?

There is a potency in human life for good and for evil. The potency for good belongs to the divine ego, to the divine soul, the eternal man. The other belongs to the physical, to the vehicle, with its passions, weaknesses, greeds, and vices. These things die when the body dies, and the divine soul arises and, in the language of the Christian Bible, "goes to its Father" — in the truest sense to the environment, the atmosphere, and the touch of divine love. Oh the glory and the joy of this view of death to everyone who feels that he has lost his dear ones! Death of the body is rebirth to the divine soul. When the soul leaves the body, it is only the physical body that dies. Then the glory and justice of the higher law — the eternal truths — is manifest.

Here is one of the best illustrations of the teachings of reincarnation that I have ever found. Let us take the great oak tree. We see it growing. It comes out with its glorious foliage in the springtime, and in the winter season it rests. It is a masterly sort of thing, grand, inspiring. It carries the marks of all the years that it has grown. But every season it goes through a change, a reincarnation, so to speak. It has apparently the same foliage as it had the previous year — the same form; but it is not the same, though the essence, the root of the tree is the same. The essence works its growth in its silent and majestic way — sleeping, waking, sleeping, waking. So does the higher soul of man.

Study all the wonderful aspects of nature: study the great ocean with its limitless power, study the tiniest flowers that come up in the spring to greet us in their simplicity, exquisite beauty, fragrance, and inner life. What a mystery! Can we not find in nature the heart of the wondrous mysteries of life?

The great, superb, majestic law of the universe and of many universes has furnished the message; and if there were no lips to speak, if we all could not utter a word, the helpful lessons for the larger view of spiritual life could be found in silent nature.

II — Love, the Great Mystery

How are we ever to go out onto the great broad pathway of life in hope and optimism when we do not understand ourselves — who we are, whence we came, or whither we go? Think of the man or woman who today loves and feels the divine touch in everything that is beautiful, who can write, who can teach, who can sing and bring out these things, and yet who may, during the dark half of the life, spend hours and days with the lowest thoughts, the most merciless and cruel expressions of the lower nature. It is the contradictions in human nature that must teach us. We must study them, we must think more of them; and the more we think, the clearer we shall see and understand and gain the knowledge needed. And the broader the picture, the greater will be our conviction.

We must grow as the flowers grow — not attempt to reach the top of the mountains in one lifetime. Step by step we climb: this is an old occult law. The ancient teachers taught it, and the people of ancient days believed and applied it. It is full of meaning. Step by step we climb to a grander vision of life and to a nobler service. As soon as the veil is lifted and the light shines through and we can see our way, if only for a day, let us follow the path of knowledge. Let us push on! Let us have confidence in ourselves, in our higher selves, in our immortal selves. Let us realize that there is a warrior within us, a presence, an indescribable something, though not seen by us in the ordinary sense; it is the presence of the divine soul within man, which exists. It speaks through the conscience and through the heart.

The greatness and the mystery of life come to us so clearly and convincingly when we study the great mystery of impersonal love. Think how many definitions there are of it. Think how the word love is misused, how it is dragged into court and into so-called marriage. But when we do realize just what it is, we who have loved, can we explain it? Where does it come from? Is it possible for man to measure it with his intellectual yardsticks? No! But in the depth of his nature, in the chamber of his soul, he feels it and he knows it. It is there but one cannot describe it.

That love is the voice of God speaking through man's higher nature. That is the immortal self. Man may err in his application of it, but the real man — all that is imperishable and eternal — belongs to the higher nature. It is not to be found on the shelf of one's library or in one's memory crammed with mere scholarship; one has not to pay a fortune to get it. All one must do is to challenge himself and find it — this superb mystery of man's divine nature!

Love is eternal: the essence of love and truth lives on and on and perpetuates itself in human life, as it lives in the trees and in every living thing. We cannot limit it. The divine soul of man lives on and on; so does true love. Anything that was true in the lives of those who have gone before, anything that was noble and uplifting, that held them to us, still lives, because it was the divine soul-attributes that made the permanent beauty and charm of their character. And although we may not hear their voices, though we may not see them, yet they themselves live.

The moment I reach out for them to comfort me, I am selfish. But sometimes, out in glorious and beautiful nature, it seems to me that the flowers talk to me and yield their secrets. And I say to myself, if these flowers can come again each year, the real essential life the same as last year, if I will open my heart and mind and believe that I am a part of the eternal life, all that belongs to me is mine forever!

This may not satisfy the reason, but it is above reason. Mere cold reasoning has its place, but it belongs only to the earth-life — to the objective life. But this *conviction* comes, and we find consolation in it after the loved ones have passed on. We ourselves carry something away with us so that we can meet the future with a consciousness of our ability to understand at least something of the infinite laws even in one lifetime. Their absence hurts, and it must hurt very much where one feels the limitation of just the one life; but one who has the broader vision and believes in another life and another life for humanity, knows that there is no break in the eternity of things since love is eternal. There is a grandeur and a unity and a sublime peace in touch with these greater thoughts.

So why should we despair? Why can we not take up life even more conscientiously than ever before? Why can we not fall back on our higher consciousness? Let us feel the force of it, let us apply it to the smallest as

well as to the largest duty; and let us recognize this wonderful surging power of divine life. Let us look upon death as the releasing of the soul from the worn-out body that it may rest and then find new life, new hope, and larger experiences in other earth-lives.

No matter how one thinks or what one believes, the truth will always be the truth. And that which is freed from the mortal body, the great living power, the higher ego, the higher soul, that which receives its benediction through the spiritual force of the eternal divine laws, that stays, that works, that is yours and that is mine forever.

III — Authority and Inquiry

To have an open mind is the first requisite for the earnest inquirer after spiritual knowledge and happiness — to be ready to receive something more than one has had before and to realize that in order to reach the depths of one's own nature and to find there the answers to some of the many perplexing questions one meets every day, one must have more knowledge, and if he cannot have full knowledge, a belief that there is more and higher knowledge for man. And when one reaches that point, he becomes quite receptive to any teachings that have truth in them.

I think it was Gladstone who said that to make great discoveries in truth, one must have authority and inquiry — and the spirit of inquiry must be very deep. But of course in things spiritual as in the material sciences, one has to be very careful what he accepts as authority. For instance, the scientists, those who seek to bring to the recognition of people only the materialistic phase of their discoveries or their researches, have left out the keynote. True scientists must be imbued with the real spirit of inquiry, which means not merely an intellectual effort, but a religious longing for the truth and a determination to branch out, to step forward, and to have the courage to declare their experiences and their knowledge in the face of all opposition.

Think how differently we should look at life if we unburdened our minds, set aside all the preconceived notions that are fluttering around in the hall of memory which should have no place there, for there is no real authority for them. Sometimes they are the mere whims of the one whom they control, sometimes they are the psychological influences of another mind, sometimes they come from the books we read, sometimes from the environment we live in, sometimes again there is a touch of heredity that brings the shadows into life.

So the human mind must find independence, and it cannot find it in the truest sense until it finds itself. And how is it going to find itself until it has clearly defined the meaning of life, why we are here, whence we came, and whither we go? All the best thoughts that we cling to and love will grow in the sunshine of this knowledge. When we can meet life understandingly, with a courage born of the divine nature, then we can understand death — and rebirth, which is the real meaning of death.

Every day the newspapers are full of the descriptions of vices and crimes and horrors of human life. The causes of these things are an enigma to nearly everybody. Of course the church will tell you that it was the work of the devil. But don't you believe it! Let me assure you that one of the greatest keys to the solution of life's problems is the fact that man is dual in nature. Take this idea home with you and apply it to your daily life. If there is anything in your life that is undoing you, so that you are losing faith in yourself and your fellowmen, study the duality of your own nature. Find out your weaknesses and then challenge the better side of yourself. If you have anyone in your family who is disappointing you and your heart is aching to see that one make a change for the better, study the duality of man.

The fact of the duality of human nature enters into every department of life. Nine-tenths of the people in the insane asylums today would never have been there and would have been in the state of normal human beings if they had understood from childhood the duality of their own natures, or if those who cared for them had understood it. I believe that our prisons would hold but few if the inmates had been taught from childhood the duality of human nature. And those in the insane asylums and in the prisons whom I do not include are marked by heredity. Instead of being confined and restrained as they are in the asylums and the prisons, they should have had in the very beginning of their deterioration all that nature will give to bring home to them the realization of their condition, that they may understandingly overcome.

Our dear ones who have become so abnormal that they seem unsafe, who have lost their balance or their control, would come back to a normal state, because that which sets the mind wrong is the lower nature. It is that which puts the boy to making the very first mistake in his life — perhaps only stealing a few pennies, after a while an automobile, then robbing, then killing — and then we allow him to be hanged!

We have within ourselves the consciousness of our essential divinity and of the power that will set in motion self-directed evolution. Then with the mind clear of the preconceptions, prejudices, dislikes, opinions, and fugitive ideas, and all the useless mental luggage that burdens the brain of man, we would have man at twenty and forty and sixty as pure and clean as when he was born because he would be living in the light of his own divine nature. He will find the balance that will come to him from this — the power to dethrone the weak, undeveloped, animal, selfish, and earthly part of his nature. We must remember that the only devil that there is in existence is the undeveloped animal in man — not outside of him.

There is no need to carry burdens through life. If one has a worry, let him put it aside. Let him make a mental picture of success and win out! How? By doing the duty at hand, doing the right thing at the right time. And if success cannot be reached in a day or even a month or a year, suffer if necessary, for you will ultimately find the key. No matter how many times one may falter or fail, we can stand up again and push on. If the motive is pure, if his brain is free from the limitations and fears and dreads, prejudices and hatreds, one can work on and on with confidence of another chance and another chance along the path of self-directed evolution. The karmic law will become your teacher, sometimes through suffering and the past mistakes of ignorance. So we leave all humanity in the hands of the higher law but work constantly, as far as our knowledge will permit us, to give people a picture of true life to live by.

IV — Reincarnation and Karma

One cannot take up any subject in earnest until he puts his mental house in order, bringing to the front only the best and ignoring the weaknesses of his nature, dethroning all those limitations that make man appear small and puny and wrong. One begins to die before he has really begun to live under the ordinary regime, with his lack of knowledge, with no spirit of inquiry, with no desire to make the world better, with no wish to find the great secrets of life that he may do justice to himself and to his God. As soon as one reaches the consciousness of being an individual human being, then comes responsibility, whether he realizes it or not. And if one goes through life carrying the burdens of unnecessary mental luggage and limited ideas of life and its purposes, he is only half living — perhaps less than that. Yet many hold that this is the design of God!

Having learned how to live at least to a degree in this one life, realizing that however much knowledge we may have gained, it is little in comparison with what is to come, and believing in evolution and in the essential divinity of man, we can at least acquire in one life ideas that give us hope of eternal progress in successive incarnations. Reincarnation and karma fit together rather admirably to help us, to give us optimism and hope, and they explain so many of the apparent injustices of life. When death comes, it really means only the death of the body in which the soul has lived. For the interior man it is merely a change, for the soul of man is immortal. It is reborn.

If we understood life as we should, even in this short school time in the primary class of life, we would understand something about our physical natures. We would have the knowledge to keep ourselves adjusted and to put us in harmony with the divine law, for no man can be truly happy who is ill. Why are so many people unhealthy? Sometimes heredity is the cause, often it is ignorance, carelessness, and indifference.

What a preparation it would be during the life to believe in these eternal verities, the soul and mind filled with a sense of absolute justice — no sadness, no regrets at thought of death, only the joy and the promise of another life and release for the soul. Of course the body should be precious to us, because it housed the soul, but it will go back to the earth just as it is said in the Bible.

It is most comforting to believe that often when we see the one who is to pass away apparently in agonies and pain, the soul — the immortal part — has already passed on and, sad as it is, it is only the body that is struggling and suffering, and the agony and the pain that we see are not felt by the one we love. Then comes the idea, where does the soul go? The soul moves on in the power of its own inner divinity, working in

consonance with these divine laws which we cannot yet explain in full; and it goes to what we might call rest for a time.

Real love is immortal; and if the love of those who are left behind is the love of unselfishness and devotion, there is no separation in the deeper sense. We are much closer than we realize to the unseen forces that make up the soul-life after the release of the soul from the body. There is no separation save that of the physical body and the breaking up of the associations that were dear to us. We should be so unselfish, so desirous of sending the soul out into the spiritual life in the right way, that only hope and trust and knowledge and immortal love will go with it and sustain it.

Let us picture the soul coming back to reincarnate on earth. We cannot with our puny minds try to fasten that soul to a position where we wish to have it. It is unjust to do this. So we must be prepared to accept that this soul will return to the place and to the associations where it will best evolve in the next life — where it can work out the heart-yearnings that were not met in a former life. Just because we cannot see these processes, we cannot say that they do not exist.

The best simile that I have for this process is in the process of gestation in the inner nature of the child that is preparing to be born. No one can explain what takes place in the deeper sense — that is a great mystery. And so are life and death the great mysteries until we find our way spiritually to a higher discernment. Until we put ourselves in harmony with the divine laws, we cannot understand them. We must put the contents of our puny minds aside; we must place reason where it should be and intuition where it should be; we must set aside our limitations, our ignorance, our prejudices, and everything that clogs the mind, that we may truly live.

In life and in death we are as one, except that the change which the world calls death, and which is really rebirth, is a higher state in evolution than the state of the former earth-life. This doctrine is very comforting. If the trees and the flowers, which have not the consciousness that man has, can become and advance and grow under the changes of the seasons, don't you believe that the divine laws in their potency are sufficiently helpful to give man his opportunity also? Let us remember that if we are to know the truth we must seek it; and if we are to gain the knowledge for our souls' advancement, we must earn it; and if we are to prove the truth of theosophy, we must find it and live it.

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Chapter 10

WHY I AM A THEOSOPHIST

There is but one Eternal Truth, one universal, infinite and changeless spirit of Love, Truth, and Wisdom, impersonal, therefore, bearing a different name in every nation, one Light for all, in which the whole Humanity lives and moves, and has its being. Like the spectrum in optics giving multi-colored and various rays, which are yet caused by one and the same sun, so theologized and sacerdotal systems are many. But the universal religion CAN ONLY BE ONE if we accept the real primitive meaning of the root of that word. We Theosophists so accept it; and therefore say, we are all brothers — by the laws of nature, of birth, of death, as also by the laws of our utter helplessness from birth to death in this world of sorrow and deceptive illusions. Let us then love, help and mutually defend each other against the spirit of deception; and while holding to that which each of us accepts as his ideal of truth and unity — i.e., to the religion which suits each of us best — let us unite to form a practical nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, or color. — H. P. Blavatsky

I — A Nature-Lover

My subject takes me back to my childhood days — far back, into the State of Massachusetts on the banks of the historic Merrimac River, immortalized by the American Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier. There I spent my childhood days on my father's estate. I lived far away from the rush and whirl of city life.

On one side of my family they were strong members of the Congregational Church, and on the other side they were materialists. I was the only daughter in the family, and even between five and six years of age I found myself questioning and studying the great mystery of life. I looked upon nature as one of God's greatest gifts. Young as I was, I realized its mystery, its wonder, its superb silence, its dignity, its life, and its teaching. I learned to love nature: the flowers, the birds, the blue sky, and all. My young life was spent largely with nature — in the woods, over the hills, in my boat, along the country waysides on horseback, and in other outdoor sports. At that time it was considered very disgraceful for a young girl to attempt to row a boat or to ride a horse astride or to swim. I was severely criticized sometimes for indulging in these innocent pleasures. A precise maiden-lady of the Puritan order promised that my life would be a very unpleasant one, and that everything would go wrong with me because I did some things a little outside the conventionalities of church life.

I never knew what fear was. I remember the first time I heard the name of God mentioned, I was so disappointed and set back and almost discouraged to think that the God that I had learned to love in nature, the God I had learned to love with all my soul, without any teachings, was, according to the preachments of man, "a revengeful and a punishing God." This set me thinking. I kept on thinking and am still thinking and am still wondering and regretting that this is believed by many. Yet I still believe in the eternal, supreme, all-powerful Light — the source, center, and all-compassionate giver of all that is true and noble in life. This is my God.

In my love of nature and in my love of the true and the beautiful, in my love of this eternal supreme power, my views broadened and I felt that there was a still greater knowledge and a more wonderful meaning to human life. As I grew older, went off to boarding school and came back to my home, and then went out into the world, married, and lived for many years in New York City, there were daily pictures before me that were so despairing, so disappointing, so beyond endurance for a human mind like mine. I saw the poverty on the East Side of New York City, I saw the street-woman, I went to the prisons and saw the unfortunates there, I read in the newspapers of men being hanged. Then I began to recognize when not so very old that men do not tell each other what they think of each other. I began to think that all men wore masks in order to hide their real selves. Finally I realized that these insincerities were the result of man's limited views of life. If a man believes in only one life and if he believes in a punishing God, he must have fear, he cannot have a proper understanding of his own divine nature, of the majesty of the soul, its power, and his future, his

responsibilities.

But all this changes when we can take the broad view of human life and believe that under all these outer aspects, all these disappointing features, all the heartache, the agony, the vice, and the crime of the world, there is within every man the divine part of his nature, and that this divinity is a part of God. There is one of the reasons why I am a theosophist, why I look at life so hopefully and with so much encouragement, why I can learn all the time to love my fellowmen, why I can call myself an internationalist in the truest sense, because I love all nations and I love all people; and I cannot be a theosophist unless I do this.

Back of the imaginings and hopes and dreams of my childhood and womanhood, deeper than the pain caused by the contrasts I have observed in human life, there is a consciousness of the love of God and the spiritual dignity of man. And it is this consciousness that is needed now to make the world better, to bring man to his own, to give him the key to life's problems, so that he can combat difficulties understandingly, overcome injustice through knowledge, and live in the joy of life in the truest and noblest sense.

Theosophists are striving to attract the attention of humanity to a consciousness of the essential divinity of man. Our purpose is not to persuade people to join the Theosophical Society, but to show humanity that there is an open door to the path of peace and of success — moral and spiritual success. That door can be found through the study of theosophy and its application in daily life. If one lives a true, noble, unselfish, clean, intelligent life, he is a theosophist. It was through the experiences which I have spoken of that I found myself closely in harmony with the teachings of the divine wisdom, theosophy.

II — Salvaging Human Wrecks

Some years before coming in touch with the Theosophical Movement I was living in New York. I had a comfortable home and no children. My love of children was very great and my love of the unfortunate also, so I began to work in the prisons in New York. I worked with women on the street, and for the drunkards and the poverty-stricken, the starving and the sick. I was happy to do it. I neglected none of my home duties, I did every duty as conscientiously as I could; but I could not enjoy life, I dared not face my conscience without doing something to lift the weight of the burdens from the suffering people.

So my work carried me down to the East Side of New York, where thousands of people come in from different countries — the immigrants, thinking when they come that America is the open door to wealth and prosperity. They find themselves in very small quarters, in very limited surroundings, very many of them go hungry and suffer much, and thus lose faith in humanity. It was among these that I worked.

Never in all my experiences with these people, even with the lowest and most depraved creature I ever met in my work in the prisons, have I lost faith in the essential divinity of man. Never! One of the great secrets of my mission, especially with this class of people, was in applying the theosophical teachings and saying to the prisoner who was condemned to be hanged: "There is another chance. God is more compassionate, more merciful than man. God never made the law that, guilty as you are, you should be hanged. Your body will die, if you are hanged, but your soul cannot be touched by the hand of man or man-made laws. The soul belongs to eternity, and it moves on and on through the scale of evolution, from one life to another, marks time with progress, and ultimately finds itself in a state of perfectibility." No matter where we go or whom we meet, we can say, there is another chance in another life, with new opportunities, with trust in these divine and immutable laws.

Remember that if we are to have justice in our lives, we must live justly. We must love the principles of justice. We must act justly. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" must not be merely an expression of the lips, we must do it. Sunday must not be the only day when we think of God and of our duty to man. It must be every day, in every duty, and in the smallest act of our lives.

In such a state of mind one can easily find one's higher self. No matter how much poverty, no matter how many disappointments, no matter how much injustice, no matter how much persecution, the dignity of the soul-life will rise and bring to man the secrets of his own divine nature. Man is a mystery, and it is that wonderful mysterious part of man, the soul, that is the promising factor in human life.

III — The Limitation of One Earth-Life

One life is not enough to satisfy man's highest hopes. Some of the greatest poets, scientists, statesmen, and artists, just at the time when they are reaching a point where they can grasp mighty truths, where they are ready to flood the world with the knowledge of the splendor of their attainments, die according to the generally accepted idea of human life. Is that all there is for these characters? Is it not more natural to think that their work is not yet finished, that this divine law of God has given every man his chances in another life, that the mistakes belong to the past and need not be a part of the next life? Thus man is led to a knowledge of greater opportunities in a future life.

With these teachings there is never discouragement, there is never a shadow or a lack of faith. There is that eternal, burning fire in the divine nature that lifts us up to the heights of hope and trust. Then these objective things, these everyday trials, these disappointments, the loss of money, personal sorrows, and heartaches, all seem so little when we realize that there are other opportunities, other chances for all, and that the mercy of the divine law is not for today, not for one life only, but it is for all eternity. And not until men can love one another, as Jesus was in himself an example of a man truly capable of loving, can they begin to know what human life means.

Fear is the result of a limited view of life, that is all.

The only thing in life to be afraid of is doing wrong. No other fears should have place in the life of man. For his inner nature, his higher nature, should show him that if he has sorrow, somewhere along the path there has been a cause for it. If somebody has treated him unjustly, he can explain it. If he is persecuted he can keep on with his work and face his enemies and conquer in the end, because he has the consciousness of not being as he has been represented to be. And so he pursues his way in full confidence.

The divine laws are perfect and immutable, and why do not we, the highest expression of life, trust these immutable laws? Simply because our views are limited, because we look at life only objectively. We pay little attention to our blessings. We half-live from day to day. We struggle, we suffer, we doubt, we have half-faith. And when we die, we die in the shadows because we are not certain of the future. But when man finds the consciousness of his essential divinity, he then begins to find all that is true and all that is noble in his own life and in his fellowmen.

It is not in the divine plan that man is to go through life living simply on faith without facts to support it. Humanity's place is on the mountaintops, viewing all life with trust and seeing its beauty, because man should be at one with God. When that vision comes, old age will be far away, and we shall find as men go on into the years of life that they will meet death with the knowledge that it is but a change — a glorious change — a release, a conquest. Death, so called, takes place as naturally as the trees in the winter shed their leaves and seem to be dead. They sleep, and in the springtime they come forth again with all their green foliage. So does the soul of man, the higher consciousness, step forth and move on with new effort and a larger trust. There is no limit to the love of God; there is no limit to these divine laws; there is no limit to the possibilities of man.

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Chapter 11

THE MIRROR OF INFINITE BEAUTY

The world is a Mirror of Infinite Beauty, yet no man sees it. It is a Temple of Majesty, yet no man regards it. It is a Region of Light and Peace, did not man disquiet it. It is the Paradise of God ... the Place of Angels and the Gate of Heaven. — Thomas Traherne

I — Traherne, the Seer

In the confusion of the world today on all lines, perhaps out of a hundred we might find only five or ten who have the broader vision of life that would enable them to see that the infinite life is mirrored in earth-life. Man's experience on earth, which is but a station, a stopping place in the progress of the soul, gives him the opportunity to find not only his own spiritual nature and the infinite powers within himself, but also to know the meaning of life and to see its beauty even in the material resources of nature.

But material life has been made paramount. Man's disquieting of this region of light and peace comes not altogether from intention, but because a great psychological wave of ignorance has been brooding over humanity for thousands of years. The uncertainty and the insecurity of human life make it impossible for man to realize in this life the beauty and the grandeur that is mirrored through the Infinite. Humanity must realize that the infinite laws, which have fashioned everything and hold everything in their keeping, are also for us. It is for us to work with them.

To understand the glory of the infinite beauty of life, we must thrill with the knowledge of our own essential divinity, we must find it within ourselves, in the depths of our hearts, of our consciences; and it must illumine our minds. One who sees life as it is and sees what humanity has been suffering under for so many hundreds of years must cultivate the spirit of compassion, of tenderness, of gentleness, and an absolute desire to lift some of the burdens. I often meet charming people of great culture who think themselves quite *au fait*. They have everything they want and expect the world to look at them and admire them. They have wealth, culture, and refinement, but they are lacking in that one great quality — the knowledge of their own essential divinity, which every man and every woman must have if they are to find the region of peace, the temple of majesty.

This is an age of inquiry. It is man's right to find his heritage, and he cannot find it until he challenges himself and learns who he is, what he is, whence he came, and whither he goes. It is the answers to these all-important questions that theosophy holds out and urges man to look into. It requires no wealth, no great intellectual attainments. It requires only a determined purpose to look upon life with a larger vision.

Galileo said that in order to know whether the world was round or flat, he had to go above it so as to look down and see it. There is a bit of occultism in this. We must rise above our ordinary selves and soar beyond the modern way of thinking. We must bury our prejudices and perhaps assume the attitude of mind we were in as little children in our innocent life. We must go back to those early days and begin over again in a sense, and try to find in our hearts some of the tender feelings we had then, that we received then, but which we have let pass us. The artificiality of modern life is distorting and destroying the spiritual life in man.

It is the mission of theosophy not only to lift humanity's burdens, but to enlighten the human mind. It points out that real knowledge is self-knowledge. This is to be gained through the challenging of the self, the finding of one's own strength and weaknesses, and recognizing the duality of human nature. That which destroys man's faith and carries him away from the path onto the sidetracks of weakness and passion and vice is the imperfect, animal part of his nature.

Yet there is mirrored in his soul this infinite beauty of life which Traherne speaks of. It is for all men; but it is only to be unfolded through a new trust, a new conception of life, a larger love for humanity, and a greater consciousness of the divinity within. In order to reach that knowledge which belongs to him, man must rise above difficulties, above his former conceptions. He must make a new thought-world for himself. He must

believe in himself. He must realize that in his soul he is a part of this infinite beauty which is mirrored in earth-life. He must sing to his soul the music of peace and brotherhood. He must lift his heart above his weaknesses and, in the way of the true student, he must look down upon the temptations that cross his path rather than be continually struggling to overcome them. This occult law will come as the breath of life to those who have lost their friends, who are in despair — even those who are homeless and hungry.

The mirror of infinite beauty can be seen in the wonderful mysteries of the simplest flowers, in the trees, in the immensity of the ocean, in the stars, and in the heavens. Then look into the eyes of humanity and, in spite of all we see there overshadowing the spiritual man, let a man challenge himself to find his own soul and that infinite beauty will shine out through his eyes. It will warm his heart; it thrill him; and he will realize that the conquest of self has been made.

Those who struggle in the shadows and perplexities of any kind can find the mirror of infinite beauty. Those who grovel in their weaknesses, in their doubts and their fears, who hold to the idea that there is but one life simply because they and their forefathers were taught it, and because it is the popular belief — such will know nothing about the beauty that is right here on this earth-plane. Yet even such may occasionally get a glimpse of it in the beautiful flowers, the grand harmonies of music, the voice of the one they love, or the words of some splendid book. But to be steadfast and firm on one's feet, to move along daily in the consciousness of one's divinity, one must rise above himself, above his passions and desires, and take an absolutely new view of life, and live according to the knowledge gained. This cannot be done until one eliminates from his mind the limitations that do not belong to the human soul. They are not a part of the higher self. They obscure and destroy all that is best and noblest in the nature and disquiet these regions of infinite beauty.

I can give these teachings to a child who is making trouble. I have seen children of ten years of age — not one but many — rise in their mental conception of the new possibilities of their own souls, under the influence of these teachings. They have not suffered in this life as much as older people have, but certainly I think at times that old half-memories come back to those young souls. I am sure I have such memories, though I cannot tell what I was in my former life. I know I lived before; that satisfies me. I cannot tell whether I was a princess or a washerwoman, and I do not care anything about it. But theosophy offers to every man wonderful keys of revelation to solve the problems and difficulties of life, to take a new view, and to fashion his thoughts and his life on wider and finer lines.

II — The Wine of Life

Some have said, "Oh, the goal is grand and beautiful, your theory is wonderful, but it is such hard work!" But it is not so if we go about it in the right way. To accept the teachings of theosophy, to ingrain them into our lives and build ourselves up to a position where we can rise in our visions and in our conceptions of greater things and look down upon and overcome our weaknesses, we must remember that step by step we climb. We must not expect to acquire full knowledge in a day, a week, a month, a year, or even in one lifetime.

With the ultimate ever in mind, we must yet live for the day. No matter how great the present difficulties, the struggles in business and the duties that pertain to the day or to the subject at hand can bring home to us a realization of some of the infinite beauty of life that cannot come to us in any other way. We have not to look ahead to future years with fear and dread, but to eliminate from our minds all those ideas that have taken root in our blood which make us the progeny of doubt and fear and, according to the old conception, of sin. But times are changing. People are daring to think more and to write more and to do more. The wonderful force of evolution is pushing its way into the thought-life of the world and molding men's minds accordingly, and it tells us of the possibility of making of this world the mirror of infinite beauty.

Man gets what he works for, and if he doesn't work for it he doesn't get it. Mere thinking about the joy of life and even reveling in it will not bring it. But when one wants truth so much that he is actually hungry for it, he gets it. It is the wine of life, so to speak, the revelation of the book of life. No language can describe it — the most beautiful things in life can never be described in words; the holiest part of our religious nature can never be uttered in words, but it is the region of light and peace.

Those who desire the truth, those who have the courage to enter the new life, those who have the desire to be reborn in a sense, must throw overboard everything that has held them down in their limitations, in their doubts, their fears, their dislikes, their passions. Why? Because the soul is seeking its evolution in the house of flesh, it is seeking to help the being to become that which it knows it can be. But the mind of man, even though cultured, is frequently the slave to this idea and that, this man's opinion and that man's opinion, and this "ism" and that "ism," so that the mind does not reflect the infinite beauty of life, but reflects only life's confusion and corruption and distress and doubt.

Yet man is a majestic being if he knows his own spiritual nature and works assiduously to become that which he was intended to be, that he may fulfill his mission as a noble representative of the higher law. Thus he may become a great factor in the divine scheme of things, making for the beauty of life, the harmony of life, the peace and the joy of life. He takes no part in the disquieting of the world. There is no selfishness in him. He is walking the path of self-conquest with such clear perceptions, such earnestness, such steadfastness, that his whole nature is reflected in the mirror of infinite beauty.

The sublimity of these teachings can make new blood in the veins, bring those who are sickly to a position of self-evolution even on the line of physical health. There is a splendor in soul-life; and when the soul reigns, commands, and overcomes, victory is won for the whole world. Then will man no longer disquiet the region of light and peace. He will not be a blot on the escutcheon of civilization. He will have reached a point where he can challenge himself and say to his own passions, selfishness, and weaknesses, "Get Thee behind me, Satan!" — for they are the Satans of his own creation. He will find that these conditions in his nature that are not controlled and not conquered in one life will have to be met and conquered in another.

We must realize that what counts in life is not what we want or what we believe in: it is what *is* or what *will be*. We often hear people saying about reincarnation, "I never want to come back to this old world again — never." But they have to come just the same, until they have learned all its lessons, for the laws of life are immutable.

We cannot move the sun or the moon or the planets or the stars, but it is great to know that *we can change ourselves*, that we are the makers of our own destiny, that we can compel the brain-mind, which is but an instrument, to be under the control of the higher nature, the soul. We cannot depend merely upon the intellectual life and be so wrapped up in it that, when the body dies, the soul has to go on and on returning to earth-life and trying it over again without having made any progress. The urge of the soul towards perfection never dies. We must have progress, evolution. This is the very fiber and core of the theosophical teachings — eternal progress.

It is for us to nurse our higher natures, to nurse the potential qualities within us; to nurse the pictures and the dreams of a future life, of a better life in this life, and to hold tenderly and affectionately in our hearts the love of the higher law which makes of this world a mirror of infinite beauty for all.

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