

Tenets of

THEOSOPHY

by

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IT happens to all men, at some period of their lives, to ask the questions: "Whence have I come? Whither do I go?" Sometimes, too, if they have suffered much, they will also ask: "Is all life mere chance? Does justice rule the world? Does God exist?"

The great religions provide answers to these questions; answers to some of them are provided by modern scientific theories also. But not all men find these answers completely satisfactory; if the answers satisfy the intellect, they fail often to satisfy the heart. Where the answers satisfy the heart, the mind often remains unconvinced. Thus it happens that in every land, in spite of the solutions offered by religion, philosophy and science, there are men and women who are seeking for a more logical and more inspiring solution. It is to these that Theosophy has a special message.

Theosophy is a body of ideas which are very old. Some of them are found in the religions and philosophies of India, China, Egypt, Greece, Palestine, Arabia. Others come from the discoveries of scientists of the past and the present. Theosophy is not presented to you as a revelation or dogma; it is not offered to you for belief, but for your examination and judgment. What, then, are the main tenets of Theosophy?

First, that the universe is not just a place where nature's forces operate by chance. Every event that has happened from the beginning of time has happened according to certain laws inherent in the universe. These laws are the expressions of a Consciousness. Everything that exists, from the electron to the largest star, is impregnated with Consciousness.

This fundamental Reality is so beyond our grasp that sages and saints have called it by contradictory terms. Many have termed it "God"; but some have called it Law, Heaven, the Great Architect, Evolution. Each man, according to his temperament and his experience, must determine how he will regard this Consciousness which directs everything. Let us call it God.

The next great truth is that the nature of God resides in every man and woman. We are not these bodies which perish; they are only garments which we wear for a while and cast aside. We are immortal souls. The perfection of God dwells in us also, for we "live and move and have our being" in Him. But we are unconscious of our Divine Nature, till we awaken it.

It is to realize our true nature that we are born. Our birth is as the entrance into a workshop or laboratory, where by work we slowly unfold our faculties. But it is not possible to realize the Divine Nature in us by the experiences of one life-time. So we reincarnate again and again. We enter into

life, we are born, we grow, we act, we finish our work and we return. Our return is death. After a rest in heaven, growing by realizing the joys we planned but did not achieve, we return to birth again, more purified, stronger, wiser, to work again, so as to become more expert in thought and feeling and action. This is Reincarnation.

As we live and act, sometimes we succeed, sometimes we fail. We do good and we do evil, guided by our altruism or our selfishness. When we do evil, we create discord in the universal harmony, and we must restore that harmony. The evil we did must be undone by new good; the good we did must be re-shaped to a more far-reaching good. This process of sowing and reaping is called Karma. It is the law of readjustment which a man puts into operation by every one of his thoughts, words and deeds.

Since all souls are divine, all souls are equal. There are young souls and old souls, but all are brothers. In spite of every difference—of birth, capacity, environment; of race, creed, sex, caste or color; of goodness or wickedness—all men form an indivisible Brotherhood. All of us, high or low, ignorant or wise, make a chain, and the stronger grow by helping the weaker. Brotherhood is the law of growth for all men.

But this Brotherhood extends to all—animals, birds, fishes, even the plants, mountains and seas. We grow by our unity with all things. The Divine Nature, which is

latent in them as in us, helps our inherent Divinity to step forth in its beauty.

There are two eternal mysteries: the mystery of God and the mystery of Man. All that we postulate concerning God of goodness, holiness, truth and beauty, resides in man. Religion, Philosophy, Science, the Arts, Commerce, Industry, Philanthropy, all these are channels along which the Divine Nature descends to reveal its Beauty. And our human nature ascends to Divinity by growing in the virtues and capacities associated with these channels.

Theosophy means the Wisdom of God. It is a statement of the modes of action of the Divine Mind. All our questions are solved when once we understand "God's Plan which is Evolution." This understanding is the heritage of every soul. But he will possess it only as he learns to be a brother to all that lives, for "Loving action is the Divine Wisdom at work, and whoso acts lovingly will inevitably come to the Wisdom."

The Theosophical Society is a world-wide international organization formed at New York on November 17, 1875, and incorporated later in India with its Headquarters at Adyar, Madras. In the United States the National Headquarters is at Olcott, Wheaton, Illinois.

It is a non-sectarian body of seekers after Truth, who endeavor to promote Brotherhood and to strive to serve humanity. Its three declared Objects are:

First—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.

Second—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.

Third—To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

The Theosophical Society is composed of men and women who are united by their approval of the above Objects, by their determination to promote Brotherhood, to remove religious, racial and other antagonisms, and who wish to draw together all persons of goodwill, whatsoever their opinions.

Books to Read

- Theosophy Simplified.....I. S. Cooper
An Outline of Theosophy.....C. W. Leadbeater
Man: His Origin and Evolution.....N. Sri Ram
First Principles of Theosophy....C. Jinarajadasa
At the Feet of the Master.....J. Krishnamurti
The Spiritual Life.....Annie Besant
Elementary Theosophy.....L. W. Rogers
Practical Theosophy.....C. Jinarajadasa
Practical Occultism.....H. P. Blatvatsky

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