The Theosophical Link

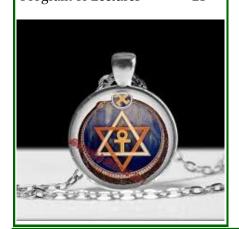


May - July 2022



INSIDE THIS ISSUI

Contacts	2
President's Report	3
Book Reviews	6
Secret History of Easter	7
The Year of the Tiger	8
Cosmic Consciousness	11
TOS News	13
A Synthesis of Theosophical Laws (Part 2)	14
The Magic Power of the Future	17
Program of Lectures	21





THE THREE HALLS

Three Halls, O weary pilgrim, lead to the end of toils. Three Halls, O conqueror of Mara, will bring thee through three states into the fourth and thence into the seven worlds, the worlds of Rest Eternal.

If thou would'st learn their names, then hearken, and remember.

The name of the first Hall is IGNORANCE — Avidya.

It is the Hall in which thou saw'st the light, in which thou livest and shalt die.

The name of Hall the second is the HALL OF LEARNING. In it thy Soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled.

The name of the third Hall is WISDOM, beyond which stretch the shoreless waters of AKSHARA, the indestructible Fount of Omniscience.

If thou would'st cross the first Hall safely, let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust that burn therein for the Sunlight of life.

If thou would'st cross the second safely, stop not the fragrance of its stupefying blossoms to inhale. If freed thou would'st be from the Karmic chains, seek not for thy Guru in those Mayavic regions.

The WISE ONES tarry not in pleasure-grounds of senses.

The WISE ONES heed not the sweet-tongued voices of illusion.

The Voice Of The Silence, H. P. Blavatsky

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society:

- To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
- To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
- Solution To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in the human being.



BOOKSHOP AND LIBRARY

Monday:

Closed

Tuesday:

6:00 p.m. to 7:25 p.m.

Wednesday – Friday:

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday:

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday & Public Holidays:

Closed



Website:

perth.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Email:



tsperth@iinet.net.au



Search for "The Theosophical Society in Perth"

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Theosophical Society, unless specifically marked as official.

Submissions

The closing date for all items for inclusion in the next edition of the Theosophical Link is:

1st July, 2022.

Freedom of Thought - Official statement

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its Three Objects is the sole condition of membership.

No teacher, no writer, from H.P. Blavatsky downwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to be attached to any school of thought which they may choose, but have no right to force that choice on any other.

Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held or because of membership in any school of thought to which they may belong. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly exercise their own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration of others.

Mission Statement

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual Self-transformation, and the Unity of all Life.

Open policy

The Minutes of all Executive Committee (EC) meetings are always available to members on request at the office. Rule Books are also available at the office for members.

Privacy policy

The Perth Branch of the Theosophical Society respects the privacy of its members. Accordingly, no photos, videos or audio recordings are to be recorded in hard copy or on the internet at any Branch event without the prior permission of each easily identifiable person.

Contact information

The Theosophical Society, Perth

21 Glendower Street, PERTH W.A. 6000

Phone: (08) 9328 8104 Web: perth.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Email: tsperth@iinet.net.au presidenttsperth@iinet.net.au secretarytsperth@iinet.net.au treasurertsperth@iinet.net.au

For payments such as Membership subscriptions or Event Bookings, please use the following details: BSB 086 488 - Acct. No. 697 487 911

You MUST include your name and the payment purpose with each transaction, so that we can identify it and process accordingly.

Page 3 The Theosophical Link

President's Report

April 2022

Firstly, I must introduce myself, I am Wyn Sperrin. You may know me as the Librarian, which is a role I am still deeply involved in, and I enjoy so much. Concurrently, I was the Vice President, the Librarian, and the Maintenance Officer, which are very busy roles. I have been involved with the events, upkeep and maintenance of the Mount Helena Retreat Centre and the Perth Branch. The maintenance and Librarian roles are still mine. Fortunately, my nursing background has prepared me for this multi-tasking, and busyness. And I can honestly say I have been enjoying all of it.

We can say we don't know what's around the corner and I can definitely say that I didn't. I never thought in million years that I would be the Acting President. It's amazing what life throws at you and hopefully for the right reasons.

I see the Theosophical Society as blessing to me. It came into my life at the right time. My passion for reading and learning is answered by Theosophy. The TS provides wonderful venues which are a great place to study.

Let me begin with what has been going on at the TS and how hard the Executive Committee has worked to achieve results.

MOUNT HELENA RETREAT CENTRE

We have great volunteers who give up their free time to come up to Mt Helena Retreat Centre and help. They never complain. They help because they believe in Mt Helena. I feel they see the vision of Phil and Ena Harris and they want this beautiful place to go on for the next generation of Theosophists. It is a peaceful place for our members to study and practise the wisdom in the works of Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Col. Olcott and other great Theosophists.

I am sure that Phil and Ena would be happy with the coming weekend — The Power of Silence. This will be a welcome reprieve from our busy lives. The peace and silence will be healing as it was always intended.

Harris House needed a fair amount work to prepare it for renting. There was cleaning, painting, new carpets, new fans and lighting. There is still more to do to the outside of the building and in time we will do this.

The Patterson House bathroom ceiling was collapsing and there was a broken ceiling fan to be repaired along with the installation of a pump to maintain water pressure. The eaves of both houses are broken, they need to be repaired before the onset of heavy rains in winter. Previous tenants left a lot of rubbish behind. Some of the rubbish was removed by the bulk rubbish verge collection last September, and we will remove the rest soon.

Blavatsky Hall and the Dining Room: We had an inspection from the Shire of Mundaring to ensure the buildings are safe and that we follow regulations. This includes working exit signs and smoke alarms. I arranged new wired-in smoke alarms to the building and new fire extinguishers and legal documentation.

We have organised a safe fire burn off in September by the fire brigade. Our volunteers do most of the clearing up at Mt Helena and they are all working very hard.

GLENDOWER STREET TS

We have been busy at Glendower St as well. New fire extinguishers have been installed and the air-conditioners have all been deep cleaned and serviced. Three toilet cisterns have been replaced. You will remember that the back fence came down in the winter storms of 2021. The fence was replaced during the January close down. Finally, a water pipe burst in the car park, which stopped water to the TS and its 3 flats. This has been fixed. The age of the TS buildings means that there will always be ongoing maintenance expenses.

Gold

The lost Gold Certificate has been a source of great controversy. The Perth Mint advised that the certificate was for display purposes and that it was not needed. The Perth Mint's records clearly showed that the Perth TS owns gold and we have invoices to prove this. The 4 oz of gold is currently valued over \$10,000.

The Executive Committee must consult the membership for transactions over \$10,000. The membership will have the opportunity to vote on the disposal or retaining the gold at the next AGM.

ACNC (Australia Charities and Not for Profit Commission)

Another area of controversy has been the ACNC annual report, which must be lodged by 31 January of each year. A month before the report is due the ACNC emails the organization and invites the organization to lodge the information and provides a link.

This year the annual ACNC report was lodged on the 24 January 2022, which was the day that I assumed the Presidency.

Information Technology Upgrade

We are upgrading the Branch's information technology, which is very out of date. The changes will be implemented in stages to ensure a smooth transition.

The initial focus will be on the office. The office equipment will be upgraded to two workstations with both computers having access to centralized records that will be automatically backed up to prevent loss of information. The new second workstation will be a laptop, which will have the dual use of connecting to the projector during Tuesday night talks and presentations in the main hall.

Once the office is operating smoothly, a smart TV and aerial will be installed in the reading room to allow viewing of documentaries and Theosophical talks on YouTube. The nature of the main hall requires a cable to take the internet to the front of the hall. This will allow access to the web. If the internet connection is transmitted by a Wi-Fi signal, it will be broken up by interference from the audience's mobile phones and their bodies. The hard-wired cable will overcome this problem.

Finally, we will update the library computers and transition to a free library software program. Currently the library books and the memberships are recorded on a very old Microsoft database, which is no longer supported by Microsoft. Eventually the database will fail, and we will lose the records of the 10,000 books in the library and our membership records. All the data has been backed up and new systems are being explored.

Program

Kerry Holly, our Program Officer has been busy developing an interesting Tuesday evening program of talks, which we will all enjoy over the coming year.

If you would like to give a talk or can recommend someone else who could give a talk, please contact Kerry.

Page 5 The Theosophical Link

Publicity

Kerry Holly is also our Publicity Officer. She is keeping our Facebook page up to date and we are attracting new people. We have just under 2,000 people following our page including Russian Theosophists. Kerry is managing our web page on the National TS website, and she is overseeing the development of our new TS Perth web page.

Membership

Rhonda Phillips, our acting membership secretary is maintaining our old database, which is at risk of collapsing. Microsoft again. The duplicate information is also stored on an Excel spreadsheet to prevent the complete loss of all information. Meanwhile she is entering all members in the Xero accounting package to allow emailed individual membership dues invoices.

Introduction To Theosophy

Our Introduction to Theosophy course will commence on 23 April and run to 4 June. We are grateful to John Davey and Harry Bayens who will run the course. All are welcome.

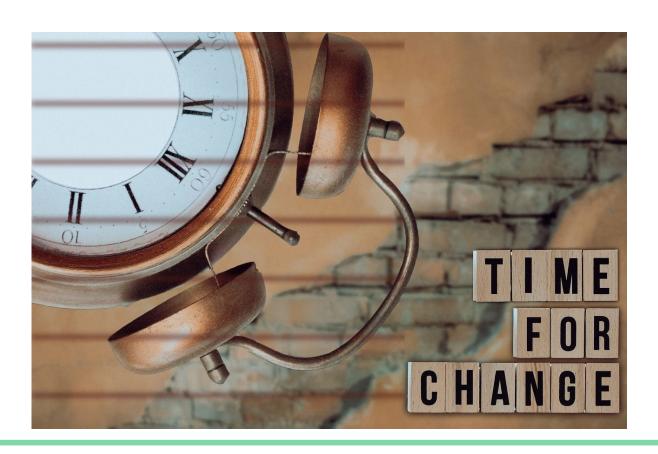
Book Group

Our Book Group will continue on Saturdays. If you interested in joining this group, please contact me to check if there is a vacancy.

Conclusion: The Executive Committee has been exceedingly busy waking up the TS after the 2-year COVID shut down. It is like starting a heavy goods train. Slow and laborious in the beginning as we provide invisible, efficient administration. We know that all the Executive Committee's hard work will eventually pay off. We hope to return the TS to a friendly, spiritually inspiring place and be guided by the Three Objects, which are the foundation of Theosophy.

Wyn

Wyn Sperrin Acting President



My Inventions: The Autobiography of Nikola Tesla, compiled and edited by Ben Johnston

This is a new addition to the Theosophical Library Biography Section. A unique ninety page read, giving fascinating insights into Nikola's early life, where he experienced flashes of light and clear detailed visions which caused him a great deal of anxiety, yet as the years passed, he accepted the different level of consciousness and "ideas came in an uninterrupted stream and the only difficulty I had was to hold them fast. The pieces of apparatus I conceived were to me absolutely real and tangible in every detail." This when speaking of the famous Tesla coil.

Nikola Tesla also expresses his appreciation of "the inestimable value of introspection in the preservation of life, as well as a means of achievement". And goes on to state "Most persons are so absorbed in the contemplation of the outside world they are totally oblivious to what is passing on within themselves."

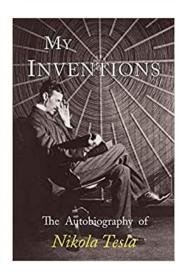
Nikola Tesla was born 10th July 1856 in a little town in Smiljan, in the Austrian Empire (modern day Croatia) and died in New York USA, 7th January 1943. Nikola describes his mother as "an inventor of the first order", and "when she was past sixty, her fingers were still nimble enough to tie three knots in an eyelash." His remains are displayed in a gold-plated sphere on a marble pedestal in the Nikola Tesla Museum, Belgrade, Serbia.

Tesla's inventions have contributed to the development of many technologies we use today, remote control, neon and fluorescent lighting, wireless transmission, smart phones, computers, laser beams, and alternating currents, the basis of our present day electrical system.

Tesla's patents and theoretical work helped usher in the Second Industrial Revolution.







Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures, by Merlin Sheldrake

When we think of fungi, we likely think of mushrooms. But mushrooms are only fruiting bodies, analogous to apples on a tree. Most fungi live out of sight, yet make up a massively diverse kingdom of organisms that supports and sustains nearly all living systems. Fungi provide a key to understanding the planet on which we live, and the ways we think, feel, and behave.

In *Entangled Life*, the brilliant young biologist Merlin Sheldrake shows us the world from a fungal point of view, providing an exhilarating change of perspective. Sheldrake's vivid exploration takes us from yeast to psychedelics, to the fungi that range for miles underground and are the largest organisms on the planet, to those that link plants together in complex networks known as the "Wood Wide Web," to those that infiltrate and manipulate insect bodies with devastating precision.

Fungi throw our concepts of individuality and even intelligence into question. They are metabolic masters, earth makers, and key players in most of life's processes. They can change our minds, heal our bodies, and even help us remediate environmental disaster. By examining fungi on their own terms, Sheldrake reveals how these extraordinary organisms — and our relationships with them — are changing our understanding of how life works.

Winner of the Wainwright Prize, the Royal Society Science Book Prize, and the Guild of Food Writers Award — Shortlisted for the British Book Award — Longlisted for the Rathbones Folio Prize.



Page 7 The Theosophical Link

SECRET HISTORY OF EASTER

by Andy Khong

Why do we celebrate Easter, and how did the holiday became represented by a cute bunny?



Most people would not know that the Easter bunny is a hermaphrodite with German roots, and that many Easter traditions are repackaged pagan rituals.



Eostre - Pagan Goddess of the Dawn

Eostre is a "Germanic Goddess of the Dawn" worshipped by pagans in pre-Christian Europe. Ancient believers would hold a big festival around the time of the Spring Equinox each year in her honour marked by feasts, giant bonfires, and sword dances in celebration of renewed life and light.

A legendary story is of Eostre entertaining a group of children — during a demonstration, she transformed her pet bird into a pet rabbit. To the amazement of the audience, this rabbit could still lay eggs like a bird. And thus, rabbits and eggs become inevitably tied to the Easter tradition. This story evolved over hundreds of years, eventually transforming into the legend of the 'Osterhase' — an egglaying rabbit who produced eggs and hid them around homes and gardens for children to find on Easter morning. Real eggs were eventually replaced with chocolate eggs, firstly popularized by Cadbury in the late 19th century.

Rabbits have a long history as symbols of fertility, and in ancient times, people believed that rabbits were hermaphrodites. Due to their rapid reproductive cycles, tiny reproductive anatomy, and extreme fertility, the people back then thought that rabbits had both sets of reproductive organs and could impregnate themselves, or could reproduce asexually. Such an incorrect belief led to an association with the Virgin Mary – that's why in Middle Age art, the Virgin Mary is often depicted with rabbits.



The Madonna of the Rabbit, an oil painting by Titian (1596)

In 596 A.D., Pope Gregory sent a mission across the channel to convert pagan Anglo-Saxons in the British Isles to Christianity. But knowing that the pagans were unlikely to simply drop their beliefs and embrace Jesus Christ overnight, he instead instructed his missionaries to embrace, rather than reject, local pagan customs in order to make Christianity more palatable for the potential converts. Over time, Christian symbols and messages were worked into these long-standing traditions as the pagans slowly became Christians.

What began as a celebration of Goddess Eostre with an egg-laying rabbit as a pagan symbol of spring and rebirth, transformed into the Christian holiday we know today as Easter. Thus Easter, which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, became superimposed on pagan traditions that celebrated rebirth and fertility.



21.12 XX 21.12 XX

THE YEAR OF THE TISER

...the 3rd animal who arrived was the Tiger!

by Andy Khong

Long, long time ago, the Jade Emperor in Heaven wanted to select 12 animals to be his guards. An immortal was sent to spread the message to the Animal Kingdom that the earlier one went through the Heavenly Gate, the better the rank one would have. The race finished in following order: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. Each zodiac animal's year comes around every 12 years, and each year is associated with a zodiac animal which influences people's personalities, career, compatibility, marriage, and fortune. The "year" is defined by Chinese lunar calendar, not the Gregorian year which we use. Chinese New Year (CNY) will fall on a day in January or February, and if you were born during those months, need to find out when CNY occurred in your year of birth.

The Tiger is the third of all zodiac animals. People who are born in the **Year of the Tiger** (1902, 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, and 2022) are known for possessing traits such as bravery, power, strength, competitiveness, and selfconfidence. They are known for their charm and are popular with others. Additionally, Tigers work enthusiastically and confidently express themselves, doing things with a dominant manner. They are hungry for excitement and crave attention. They can also be rebellious, short-tempered and outspoken, preferring to give orders rather than take them, which often leads to conflict. Tiger people may appear calm but there is often a hidden aggressiveness, but they can also be sensitive, humorous and capable of great generosity and love. There is never a dull moment with a Tiger.

Page 9 The Theosophical Link



The Year of the Rat (2020) was about survival, and the Year of the Ox (2021) was about anchoring ourselves in a new reality. The Year of the Tiger (2022) will be about making big changes especially after the Pandemic. This will be a year of risk-taking and adventure. We are finding enthusiasm again, both for ourselves and for others. Everyone is fired up, generosity is at an all-time high and social progress feels possible again.

Chinese New Year begins in Year 2022 on 1st February and traditionally is celebrated over a period of 15 days. The 'Family Reunion Dinner' is an entrenched cultural practice with the Chinese diaspora because generations of family travel from all over to reunite for this single meal, which is widely regarded as the pre-eminent meal of the year. Most Chinese Restaurants in Australia would offer a Banquet during the first 15 days of Chinese New Year with dishes that you would not find during the rest of the year, e.g. Prosperity Salad with Salmon Sashimi, Abalone-Shark-Fin-and-Sea-Cucumber-Soup, Stir Fried Black Fungus with Snow Pea and Sliced Lotus, Rainbow Salmon Platter, Black-Moss-Sea-Cucumber-and-Chinese-Mushroom, etc.

While the Chinese in Guangdong (Canton) traditionally prepare seven-vegetable soup or rice congee, overseas Chinese communities in South-East Asia toss "Yee Sahng" (traditionally a seven-colour raw fish salad) instead for continued wealth and prosperity. Yee Sahng originated in Malaysia & Singapore and has now spread to the Chinese diaspora worldwide.

Prosperity Salad with Salmon Sushi or Rainbow Salmon Platter served in Australia is the famous raw fish salad known as "Yee Sahng" in Cantonese; it usually consists of strips of raw fish, mixed with shredded vegetables and a variety of sauces and condiments, among other ingredients. It is often served as part of a multi-dish banquet dinner, usually as the appetizer due to its symbolism of "good luck" for the Chinese New Year. Diners proceed to toss the shredded ingredients into the air with chopsticks while saying various "auspicious wishes" out loud, or simply "lor hei, lor hei" (meaning "scoop it up, scoop it up" in Cantonese). It is believed that the height of the toss reflects the height of the diners' growth in fortunes, thus diners are expected to toss enthusiastically. Yee Sahng is considered a symbol of abundance, prosperity, and vigour.

During Chinese New Year, you will see Lions synchronise dance movements and actions to music of beating of drums, cymbals, and gongs. This is a tradition performed to create a festive atmosphere, and bring happiness, prosperity, and good luck for the upcoming year. Chinese New Year is one of the most popular and celebrated holidays in the world, and festivities extend throughout the world. In future, this would be the perfect time to visit Chinatown in Northbridge / Perth, and see what Chinese New Year is really all about!

Australia Post has been ushering in the new Lunar Year every year (for over 30 years) by issuing Chinese New Year stamps and First Day Covers.

To greet someone Happy New Year, you would say "Kung Hey Futt Choy" (in Cantonese) or "Gong Xi Fa Cai" (in Mandarin). Wishing you luck,

abundant fortune, love, health, peace, and prosperity this Chinese New Year of the Tiger!

The Year of the Rabbit will start on 22/1/2023.



Yee Sahng (Prosperity Toss) during Chinese New Year



Lion Dancers prepare for the Lunar New Year



Happy Chinese New Year. Kung Hey Futt Choy (in Cantonese), Gong Xi Fa Cai (in Mandarin)



Page 11 The Theosophical Link

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Tina Hentisz



Cosmic consciousness is an expression that is generally well understood by most people of the Western World. Cosmic consciousness may be an awareness of living life from a Cosmic perspective; one could consider oneself to be but a single inhabitant of the Cosmos or Greater Universe. One could be called a cosmopolitan: to be sophisticated and well-traveled, home in all parts of the world. A true cosmopolitan may be free of national favoritism and prejudice and appreciate all of the diversity in culture and lifestyle. No doubt, such a basic understanding of Cosmic consciousness is already a grand concept, but there is much more to Cosmic consciousness than just this one-dimensional clarification.

Cosmic consciousness can also be understood as a divine or spiritual awareness; that is not only an awareness of everyday living and contact, but also the awareness of unseen influences that may be all around us. According to many spiritual teachings there is an invisible connection that links each of us to all there is; this divine connection may be intuited by the individual, or not. Such a link or intuition may as yet be sporadic or come at the odd moment, but will often be very useful in determining what needs to be done next.

Have we not all known something intuitively, or sensed something at an unexpected time? It is not so strange, in fact it is very much part of any life, even though some will tune into this kind of inner feeling more than others. Can a mother know when her child is in trouble? A feeling of anxiety or emotional turmoil can alert a mother when her child has an accident or is in deep trouble. This mother/child connection has been reported widely all around the world. Or maybe this has happened to you; a thought about a long lost friend arrives and a few hours later, surprise, surprise, you meet him on the

street! Or she/he phones you after a long absence. One could feel intuitively not buy a second- hand car and of course, it turns out to be a real lemon! Or perhaps someone will have a sudden notion to slow down before a green light at an intersection- and an out-of-control truck runs a red light. Phew, goodness gracious, near miss!!!!!

Cosmic consciousness could be considered a vital alert in an atmosphere primed for possible future events that you have picked up on. It is feasible to pick up on these minute vibrations or messages; in fact, any message or vibration may be specifically honed for your personal attention, up to you to act upon or not. So; if you have plans to climb Mt Everest tomorrow and you have a vivid and alarming dream about falling down a deep icy crevasse you may be wise to forget about that hazardous climb for now.

This may be another example; two people thinking of the same thing at the one time. This is quite common between husband and wife. This transference can also happen at staff meetings where it will be annoying especially if the idea or thought matter is considered to be unique.

How can someone just "steal" your idea? Consider it like this; two people happening to be searching on the same wavelength momentarily; both naturally skillful in adapting a subtle resonance into a verbal expression. But who caught the travelling thought abstraction first? Or was the idea stored within the scope of a personal consciousness by the originator (for later referral) and unintentionally sent on its way? Who knows, who can tell? With this kind of human sensitivity and pick-up skill becoming quite common there is no doubt that for many individuals a greater perception and heightened consciousness is unfolding. As Nikola Tesla said:

"If you want to find the secrets of the Universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration."

Perhaps you consider this greater Cosmic consciousness and unseen influence nonsense. We do live in a wonderful world where a practical and logical intelligence rules, unseen things are unseen things, who can prove it? It just makes good common sense to be logical, grounded and skeptical, until proven otherwise. How else can we find the truth?

Gullibility and a simple acceptance of invisible matters and influences will not do in this 21st century, although there could be some consensus on human emotions. Yet, just for the joy of further dissertation; think of the sweet fragrance of a rose or jasmine as you enjoy a stroll in the garden. Can this fragrance be seen or touched? It is there, we know about the molecules in the air, we can detect it through refined receptors up our nose, but it will be a lot tougher to touch or to measure it as it wafts

about. Sound also travels and cannot be observed, yet it is perceived through the ear quite easily. What about electricity, microwaves or gamma waves or even the power of love, panic, anger or hate? They are all considered to be invisible streams of energy; the influence and consequence of any can be magical, immensely powerful, useful or utterly disastrous.

There is much that needs to be said on Cosmic consciousness. If we take a look on the Internet much research has been done and the complexity of Cosmic consciousness is sure to be astounding. As Theosophists we propose to live a life with a voluminous perspective, this intuition or realization will often be very useful in determining personally what needs to be done next. Do remember though that some things need to happen for others to occur. Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.

We are the change that we seek. Be prepared for miracles.



If you want to find the secrets of the Universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration.

Page 13 The Theosophical Link







The Theosophical Order of Service was formed to give members of the TS a platform in which to do service to humanity, as the three ideals of Theosophy are Study, Meditation and Service.

We are a very small dedicated group and would welcome anyone who feels they would like to do some service for humanity with love.

Love and Blessings to all,

Gailene Wester

TOS Chairperson — [gailenefran@gmail.com — 0488 019 349]



Third Sundays of the month @ 2:00 pm TS Hall - 21 Glendower St., Perth

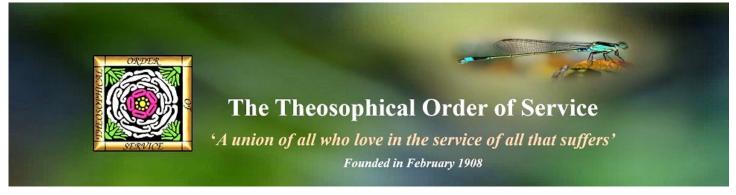




TOS / LCC combined:

Taize World Peace music meditation:

First Fridays of the month @ 6:00 pm — at the Liberal Catholic Church, Cnr. Brewer and Lacey Sts., Perth



A SYNTHESIS OF THEOSOPHICAL LAWS



By Gaston Polak

Part 2 of 2

(Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, May 1937)

THE LAW OF EVOLUTION

V. Action-Will. Law of Evolution.

The One seeks to imprint its mark on the Multiple. This is the divine plan, "God's Plan, which is Evolution."

This evolution is possible only with the aid of the laws of causality and rhythm. It is first a descending arc, in which the One breaks up and disperses more and more, forming thus an evervarying multiplicity and complexity. Then when this division, and at the same time this descent into matter, has been carried as far as is necessary, the curve of evolution starts on its upward journey. Spirit then manifests more and more through the medium of matter. Cohesive energy gradually surmounts dispersive energy, and thus is the slow return to Unity.

Since the appearance of the Fifth Race, our world has already slightly passed the dead level, that is, the deepest point of contact with matter of this majestic journey, but how far we still are from seeing the results! This formidable cycle is, of course, interpenetrated with minor cycles, rhythmic alternations, heights and depths, progress and regress, and it is these which sometimes make us doubt the reality of evolution, blinded as we are, often, by the momentary regression of one of these smaller cycles only. But the summit of each one of them is a little higher than that of the preceding summit, and the basic curve continues serenely its slow and imposing course.

The spiritual evolution of man, also, has its grand rhythm, its descending and ascending arc. The human soul evolves at first by descending into matter; in the most varied experiences man seeks his pleasure in taking, in always taking. This is the process called "Procession" by Plotinus. Then comes the moment when at last man begins to understand

that this incessant pursuit is in vain, that the joys thus acquired soon flee from his grasp. Then begins the opposite process, that of the "Conversion" of Plotinus, where man seeks his joy in giving, in fleeing more and more the outside world; where man begins to aspire entirely towards the supreme Union from which he had fled hitherto.

These two arcs are given the Sanskrit names of Pravritti Marga and Nivritti Marga, the path which leads away, and the path which leads home. Naturally this slow and double evolution could never be possible without the aid of the Law of Karma, which decrees that there can be no effort without the fruit thereof, and also without the survival of the spiritual Ego through the succession of personal selves in the rhythm of the continuous round of births and deaths.

THE LAW OF SACRIFICE

Law No. 6. The Law of Sacrifice.

This evolution was only rendered possible by the sacrifice of the One, which first consented to limit itself, and thereafter to break itself into multiplicity. As the poet Iwan Gilkin has said in his "Prometheus":

Quand l'Un se fit plusieurs, il déchira son être, Et l'Unité, sous mille aspects, dut disparaître; Mais ce n'est là qu'un rêve, et la réalité Unique, c'est toujours l'éternelle Unité.

Or, roughly translated:

When the One became Many, its being was riven, And the One many-sided to darkness was driven. 'Twas but fugitive dream, and the Truth sempiternal Resides in the One, and the One is Eternal. As Theosophy teaches us, this cosmic sacrifice of the Divine Unity in order to become manifest is threefold.

First, the descent and the dispersing of the One in non-differentiated matter, pradhana, in order to form atoms or differentiated matter.

Then a vibratory impulse into the matter thus brought into control, in order to create all living entities, forms and consciousness.

Lastly, to such of these consciousnesses as are sufficiently close to individualization, another divine stimulus, in order to make of men the future collaborators of God.

It is a fact that where there is creation, there is necessarily limitation and separation, that is to say, sacrifice on the part of the creator. To create is always to pass from the continuous to the discontinuous, from the moving to the unmoving, from the one to the multiple. To create a work of art, as for example a statue, is to imprison in matter a divine spark. To communicate a thought by speech or letter is to cause its descent from a higher plane in order to encase it in form, in words which necessarily stifle and fetter it.

But this sacrifice is joy, precisely because it is creative.

THE LAW OF CORRESPONDENCES

Law No. 7. Law of Correspondences.

Such multiplicity is merely apparent from the point of view of the Absolute, the One is the only reality. If this is so, this Unity, this fundamental identity of all things must be marked by analogies, by correspondences amongst the different phenomena in Nature.

In the "Smaragdine Tablet" the following Hermetic explanation is given:

"Il est vrai sans mensonge, il est certain et très vrai, que ce qui est en haut est comme ce qui est en bas, que ce qui est en bas est comme ce qui est en haut, pour l'accomplissement du miracle de la chose unique."

H.P. Blavatsky, in Isis Unveiled (I, 507), gives the following version:



"What is below is like that which is above and what is above is similar to that which is below to accomplish the wonders of one thing."

It is this same idea which demonstrates the correspondence of the macrocosm or great universe and the microcosm or small universe, i.e. man.

This principle is of considerable importance from the point of view of intellectual study. When the solving of a certain given problem in research presents too great a difficulty, one can try a method of research along an easier line. Once the solution is found, it can be applied to the original problem, on condition that the key to such a transposition is known. This key varies in accordance with each correspondence, and this therefore is the great obstacle which has to be overcome.

Science has employed and still frequently avails itself of this method of research or of description of phenomena. A very interesting example is that of the Infinitesimal Calculus, that marvellous instrument of investigation discovered by Newton and by Leibnitz. When a function, a curve, a surface, a phenomenon, are too complex to be studied globally at one and the same time, the Differential Calculus takes one infinitely small fraction of the whole in simplified order; then, by means of the Integral Calculus, one can pass from that simplified stage to the phenomenon in its integrality.

If Bohr has described the atom as a miniature solar system, whether this representation be true or erroneous, it is this obsession of the principle of correspondences which has compelled him to do so. It is easy to multiply these examples.

A World of Symbols

In Occultism, in Theosophy, this Hermetic law is naturally interpreted and applied in a different manner. We apply it mainly in the sense of the correspondence which exists between the material world and the spiritual, between man the microcosm and the universe the macrocosm, between physical man or his personality, and divine man or monad.

The whole of The Secret Doctrine is, in fact, nothing else than an assemblage of developments or correspondences of this kind. The last volume, especially, is almost entirely devoted to the correspondences existing between metals, days, planets, colours and sounds. The symbols of The Secret Doctrine show us in a concrete and practical example, a method which we can apply by means of thought in the world of the spirit.

The whole world is naught but symbols. Our

physical body, our personality, are symbols of our spiritual reality. Individual man is the symbol of humanity, and vice versa.

Willst due die anderen erkennen? Such in dein eigenes Herz.

Or roughly translated:

Wouldst thou understand others? Seek within thine own heart.

And as Baudelaire says:

La Nature est un temple, où de vivants piliers Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles; L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symbols, Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.

Or, freely translated:

Nature is a temple from whose living pillars At times escape confuséd words. Man passes by, through a forest of symbols Which turn on him familiar glances.

To learn the Key and the Note which will enable us lo apply these symbols to our own purification and development, and above all, in helping others and in our personal relations, therein lies the true secret of Occultism.



Page 17 The Theosophical Link

THE MAGIC POWER OF THE FUTURE

By J. Eleanor Stakesby-Lewis

(Reprinted from The Theosophist, April 1948)

In the restless search of the world for readjustment, we see two tendencies forcefully at work: the power of the *Future* and the power of the *Past*. Out of the clash of forces where tide and backwash meet, the present is born. Most people are entirely a product of the past, the evolutionary life-force drives them onward and bit by bit their character is built from experiences in their past. Such a progress is extremely slow. The process of individualization starts at the entrance into the human kingdom, and continues until separateness from the source of life

reaches its limit and self- assertion becomes the keynote of life. When the life-force reaches the circumference of being, indecision sets in and a conflict arises between past and future, for the future starts to beckon man to return to the centre. Then the selfish purposes he pursued lose their grip on him, yet the faint whisperings from within are not yet understood. This conflict causes a period of unhappiness, of tragedy, of melancholy.

There is a Peace
that passeth
understanding,
it abides in the hearts
of those who live in
the Eternal...

Millions today are finding themselves in that dilemma and only a clear vision of the future can restore to them the faith in Life's purpose and save them from utter despair. Many today, especially the younger ones, feel instinctively that they belong to the future and their craving for some spiritual experience expresses itself in a restless condemnation of all that is traditional, of all that is built upon the past.

The Past, to them, is a symbol of darkness, of sorrow and ignorance — the Future belongs to them, it is something to be built and full of promise. They are eager to build, yet without a plan they will

build but a new chaos with little hope of some kind of security. The years of war have demolished all hope of outer security and have shattered for many the inner security they found in their faith.

Wherever we go we meet human suffering, and the sensitive and sympathetic heart looks in vain for a resting place, for wherever he seeks peace or happiness the sharp contrast of pain and misery haunts him. It seems impossible for him to escape this depressing feeling of utter helplessness, for whatever he tries to do to lessen the suffering seems

like removing a drop from the sea. Yet we feel that there *must* be some attitude possible in which the clash and discord resolve themselves into harmony, there must be some security to be found within. There must be some outlook on life that reconciles our individual needs with the needs of our race. It must be possible, even in our day, to live a noble and compassionate life, without being shattered by the misery we daily encounter. It must be possible to

establish the right relationships towards our fellowmen.

And so we find our hearts often crying out for Peace in the midst of all this discord, an inner Peace, a centre of Harmony, wherefrom we can take a view of life and draw new courage for right action. When we quiet the mind and truly yearn for Peace, a well-known phrase may come to our mind: "There is a Peace that passeth understanding, it abides in the hearts of those who live in the Eternal..." In our heart, "nearer than hands and feet," we are told to seek for this source of life, this central point of true security!

It is strange that man seeks everywhere for happiness before it occurs to him that the only abode of real happiness is within him. How blind we are, for if we would observe Nature, we would discover the working of a cyclic law, whereby the life in all things periodically returns to its source, where it is renewed for a fresh outburst of activity. Is not a tree a great symbol that speaks to us of the miracle that takes place during the stillness of winter? Everywhere Nature speaks of a return to the



source, and once we have discovered this we know that we have to seek within. The law of gravity is only an outer sign of a much greater Law, a scheme whereby the emanations of the Divine must return to their Source, for they are bound to it in an unbreakable union. Strong is the magnetic force which links us to this Centre. As the seed in the dark earth is driven by an irresistible urge to grow upward and to seek the light, so are we urged by the call of the spiritual Light. The Future calls to growth — to rebecome that which in essence we are. Man answers this call and the path opens before him. Then he turns his back on the past and faces his Future with an ever-growing eagerness. The Call is irresistible, his answer irrevocable, for once he has set out on this quest, there is no return possible.

That is the Magic Power of the Future. It is the commanding voice of the Inner Ruler, giving his marching orders for our evolution, first silent, uncertain, gradually more articulate, finally the only voice heard, for it will have drowned all earthly sounds.

When Life has reached the outermost circumference of manifestation, the "Ring-pass-not" of the Logos, the tension must be enormous. Imagine how far the divine life-principle has been drawn away from its centre! Here we find at work the magnetic power of the greater law of gravity, a centripetal force, which draws life back to the centre. On the downward arc of our evolution we are, as it were, forced away from the centre, drawn by a force without into experience after experience which spins a network of "Fetters" around us, but after the turning point has been reached, the outer force loses its grip and we obey another force within, which works in opposite direction and draws us back.

That is the Monad awakening, the innermost Self calling, the power of our Future. The "Silent Watcher" stirred into action, becomes the "Warrior within". First the spark is sent out into the darkness like the Prodigal Son; afterwards, of his own will, he returns to his home. When this state has made itself felt, not without much struggle and conflict, we begin to feel the life in the vehicles as a tension and the inner life as a relaxation, and life flows back to the greater Life as the river seeks the ocean.

As this is a process of liberation the entanglements become the "fetters" we have to cast off. The entire teachings of the Lord Buddha are based upon this natural necessity towards liberation, and His Noble Eightfold Path shows us the process of casting off the fetters — for nothing holds us back that is not of our own making. At that period a furious struggle between the Past and the Future rages in our heart; the Past, which we still are in the personality, binds us to the circumference and the magnetic link with the centre is stretched almost to breaking point. Then it becomes necessary to let the strain go periodically and to experience that relaxation which quite naturally draws us back into the centre of our true being. We have hardened ourselves so much in our habits, that the natural re-creative process of withdrawal within has become for most quite an unnatural effort. But there is no other way. The answer to all our longings lies within and the time comes for every man when he shall find it there.

If this is the final secret of life, let us then see if we can find some common denominator in the various religions and philosophies pointing to the same Truth. Page 19 The Theosophical Link

In ancient Egypt we have the following teaching: "Remember, O Man, that thou art God and to God thou shall return." In the Hindu philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says to Arjuna: "I am the Self, seated in the heart of all beings, whatsoever is glorious, good, beautiful and mighty, understand thou that to come from a fragment of My splendour."

"Om, mani padme hum!" says the Buddhist reflecting on the hidden jewel in his heart. "The Kingdom of God is within you"; says the Lord Christ, and also: "Ye are all the children of Light." And the Muslims assert: "Verily we are of God and unto Him we return."

Those who have ears to hear will find the message everywhere in the Holy Scriptures of the world. Those who have heard the Voice of the Silence will hear the same message in their heart, and then they will know that the home has been found, and that the Ray of God's Light, once sent out into the darkness, has become the "Path of Return". True enlightenment comes from within, it is the shining of the Divine Spark within, which in increasing measure becomes the "Light on our Path," and that light is our true being, our future, our goal.

The question now arises: how can we know the goal, which is hidden from our sight? Can the acorn know the tree it shall be? Does the seed know the beauty and the fragrance it contains? Can man in the midst of this world of illusion perceive the glory of manhood that will crown him, when the Divinity within will be released? The Philosophers and Mystics of all ages confirm that we can, for they say that we have always known that great yonder. Did not the poet say:

O world invisible, we view thee, O world intangible, we touch thee, O world unknowable, we know thee!

In *The Imitation of Christ* the Lord says to the soul yearning for union with Him: "Thou wouldst not seek Me, unless thou hadst already found Me." And Plato said: "If thou didst not know that which thou seekest, how wouldst thou recognize it for that which thou wast seeking when thou hadst found it?"

It has been called the "homing instinct" of the Soul. We are always seeking for our "lost half," the "Innermost Self," the "One without a second," the "Inner Man, immortal". During the whole of our evolution this Innermost Self has been the "Silent Watcher". He has never been away from us, but is abiding his time in the recesses of our own heart, and we shall hear his voice whenever we listen in. He is the power that draws us to growth. He is the progressive urge in all we do. He is the Monad, the Magic Power of the Future, which can be discovered here and now by steady concentration and meditation upon the Ultimates of our existence. When this potential future has been awakened within a man's heart, he will respond to the ideal of The Path, and the direction of his further evolution then progressively returns inward. He becomes Future-intoxicated and evolution becomes swift, for the star of his potential Adeptship begins to shine upon him. The man, while still living in the world, grows in vision, determination and idealism. He renounces happiness and follows duty, not as a sacrifice, but with the joy of a generous self-donation. He now seeks to fulfil his Dharma and becomes a law unto himself, and gradually his life comes into line with his true Destiny. The personality may yet err and waste time on the way, but not for long can we aberrate from our true road and every experience is designed to draw out this hidden "uniqueness".



Several instances have been told, in which we can detect the influence which the future exerts upon a man's evolution. We have heard how a Buddha-to-be takes the vow thousands of years ahead before a living Buddha. We know that touching story about the young boy Chatta who pledged himself to

become a Saviour of humanity. For every one there is a great work that awaits him, and if we dwell on this thought we can see that we are being moulded and trained along a certain line to develop the necessary characteristics. We cannot understand ourselves unless we know that the true ruler of our lives is the Inner God and that all conscious activity springs from that spiritual source, and then we

know that the little destinies of our lives down here all merge into the Great Destiny of our awakened Future.

The soul of man is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit. It is only by virtue of this God within us that the Lord Buddha could say to his beloved disciple: Work out your own salvation

with diligence. All the stress is upon personal effort as shows the following well-known passage:

"Therefore, Ānanda, be ye lamps unto yourselves, be ye a refuge to yourselves, betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a refuge. Look not for a refuge in anyone besides yourselves. — And those, Ānanda, who either now or after I am dead shall be a lamp unto themselves, shall betake themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to the Truth as their refuge, shall not look for refuge to anyone beside themselves — it is they who shall reach the very topmost height... But they must be anxious to learn."

The more we discover about Life, the more we see *God immanent*. God *in* everything, everything *as God*. This is the psychology for the New Age, which will solve all relationships. Thus the seed of humanity will burst forth to flower and the cause of all sorrow, the *sense of separateness*, will be changed into the joy of communion with all that lives. By releasing this magic Power of the

Future we unfold that Life Divine, which shall be the gospel of the new humanity and cannot but bring to us the Kingdom of Happiness.



The soul of man is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

Expressions of Interest — Residence For Rent

Harris House at Mt Helena

The Harris House at the Mt Helena Retreat Centre is available for rent.

We invite the TS members who may be interested in this property, to submit an expression of interest.

To apply please email:

presidenttsperth@iinet.nett.au

Enquiries: Wyn Sperrin

Phone 0421 821 944



Page 21 The Theosophical Link

PROGRAM OF LECTURES

Definition of meeting types and relevant guidelines

- **Public Meetings** All members and the public are welcome to attend.
- General Meetings For Perth members, with interested members of the public welcome to attend up to 4 meetings, with the objective to explore and confirm an interest in becoming a member of the TS. If after attending 4 meetings the person is not interested in becoming a member they are requested to restrict their visits to other options open to the public.
- Members Only Meetings Are strictly for current Perth and visiting TS members only. Non-members
 will not be admitted to the meeting.

All sessions, unless otherwise stated, run from 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM

The contents presented and opinions expressed in the lectures are wholly the responsibility of the speaker and are not necessarily those of the Theosophical Society in Perth.

Мау		
Tuesday 3 May	Origins of Reiki — by Travis Mills	
General Meeting	The Western system of Reiki celebrates 100 years in 2022. Travis has studied Reiki and its systems for over 26 years including 2 ½ years apprenticeship before gaining his Master Degree. The history of the Japanese founder Usui Mikao, the ancient Ki energy, and the myths and truth in regard to Reiki.	
	You are invited to a <i>Hatsurei Ho</i> meditation following this talk; those who wish to depart at 8:30pm can do so.	
Tuesday 10 May	White Lotus Day	
General Meeting	This May 8th will be the 131st anniversary of the death of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, who died in 1891. You are all invited to join us to celebrate and commemorate this remarkable woman.	
	Video: White Lotus Day: Awakening to Higher Consciousness, by Pablo Sender.	
Tuesday 17 May General Meeting	Theosophical Classic, "The Masters and their Wisdom" Part 3 of 4 — Video presentation, by Tim Boyd	
General Meeting	This series of four videos has been developed to present the Theosophical teachings, not as abstract philosophical concepts, but instead as tools to help people face to-day's challenges, and enable the individual to lead daily life spiritually.	
Tuesday 24 May	Near Death Experience — by John Davey	
General Meeting	Since Dr. Raymond Moody first set the ball rolling in 1975, the Near Death Experience (NDE) field has become highly organized and attracted well-recognized researchers. John presents a review and an update of what's been taking place and how both experiencers and non-experiencers alike might benefit from this material.	
Tuesday 31 May	A Seeker's Experience With Crop Circles — by Anne Wray	
General Meeting	In 2016, Anne went on a longed-for trip to look at Crop Circles in the UK. This talk will cover her experiences, and her subsequent thoughts and investigations.	

June		
Tuesday 7 Jun	Runes – Keys to Consciousness? — by Travis Mills	
General Meeting	In this presentation Travis will share with us some Rune history, and how they still exist in our modern times today. For those interested in symbols, ritual and the Runic 'Magickal alphabet' – this is the talk for you. He may even draw things on the whiteboard! Travis is happy to provide a Q&A session after this presentation.	
Tuesday 14 Jun	Saint Germaine and His Gift of the Violet Flame — by Mary Marechal	
General Meeting	The teachings of <i>The Summit Lighthouse</i> have helped Mary reconnect with her spiritual roots and develop a personal connection to God and the Ascended Masters. She has found the use of mantra and decrees, through the science of the spoken word, very helpful in her daily life; especially the use of the Violet Flame given by "Beloved Saint Germaine". Mary's spiritual goal is to make her ascension at the end of this life.	
Tuesday 21 Jun	Krishnamurti: The Impossible Question — by Tina Hentisz	
General Meeting	Krishnamurti wrote many books, including <i>The Impossible Question</i> ; which delves deeply into human consciousness. The essence of his teachings is that societal change and world peace can only occur through a complete change of individual's consciousness. This illuminating talk and pictorial presentation is based on excerpts of this publication which will surely bring home some meaningful realizations.	
Tuesday 28 Jun	Spiritualism and Psychism - A Theosophical Perspective — by Perry Coles	
General Meeting	Spiritualism, as commonly understood, is a view of life that recognizes the survival of a personal "soul" or "spirit" after the death of the body, and the ability of that surviving entity to communicate with the living. Psychism is a general term that embraces a range of paranormal occurrences and faculties. This presentation will give an overview of what theosophy has to say on these subjects.	
July		
Tuesday 5 Jul	Astrology and the Seven Rays — by Becky Newell	
General Meeting	The seven rays is a concept that has appeared in several religions and esoteric philosophies in both Western culture and India since at least the sixth century BCE. Becky is a long-term member of the Theosophical Society in Perth.	
Tuesday 12 Jul General Meeting	The Ancient Language of Sacred Sound - The Acoustic Science of the Divine — by David Elkington	
	Book presentation, by Kerry Holly. "This book is a touchstone for rediscovering some of the deepest mysteries of antiquity. Mystical sciences behind all religions are a revelation that will cause a seismic shift in our perception of the wisdom of the Ancients." — Paul Broadhurst, co-author of <i>The Sun and the Serpent</i> .	
Tuesday 19 Jul	Mind and Body Connection ™ — by Ingrid Grace	
General Meeting	Discovering our personal freedom; reconnecting with compassion to ourselves and others; by becoming conscious of our traumas, fears and conditionings and, consequently releasing their power over us. Ingrid will help us appreciate and understand what science tells us and consider fresh paths of treatment and remedies for	

Page 23 The Theosophical Link

July		
Tuesday 19 Jul General Meeting	(cont.) diseases and distortions in the human psyche not seen before. Healing and reconnection of mind, body and spirit is a way back to our true home, awakening our aliveness so we can have a greater connection not only with ourselves; but all around us, humans, animals, nature and universal realms.	
Tuesday 26 Jul General Meeting	Theosophical Classic, "The Masters and their Wisdom" Part 4 of 4 — Video presentation, by Tim Boyd	
	This series of four videos has been developed to present the Theosophical teachings, not as abstract philosophical concepts, but instead as tools to help people face to-day's challenges, and enable the individual to lead daily life spiritually.	



INTRODUCTION TO THEOSOPHY



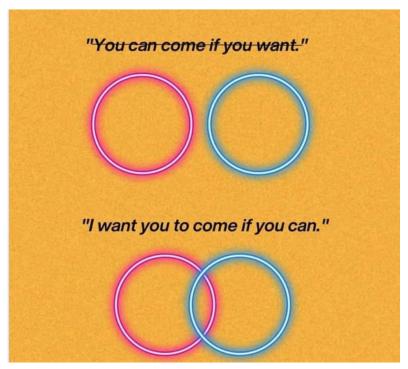
Course

Saturdays 2:00-3:30 pm April 23 – June 4, 2022 EVERYONE IS INVITED AND WELCOME – no charge

> Theosophical Meeting Hall 21 Glendower Street, Perth 6000 9328 8104 – tsperth@iinet.net.au

April 23	The different states of matter and our vehicles of consciousness
April 30	Reincarnation
May 7	Karma
May 14	Life after death
May 21	Progressive development and cycles
May 28	The spiritual path and the Occult Hierarchy
June 4	One Life in all things







The Theosophical Link Contributions

Members of TS Perth Branch are heartily invited to contribute articles, poems, book reviews and any news affiliated with the Branch to the Editor for possible future inclusions in the Link. Email your submissions to **tsperth@iinet.net.au** — these will be gratefully accepted. The closing date for all items for inclusion in the next edition of the Theosophical Link is: **1st July**, **2022**.

Your contributions and any feedback are truly appreciated. A big Thank-You to our regular contributors!