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Editor

PRADEEP H. GOHIL

A STEP FORWARD

These are unprecedented times with the worldwide attack of Corona Virus on human beings. The eight weeks' lockdown in India has given time to the people to think about why all this is happening in the world. Invariably, the answer is the Law of Karma. A basic understanding of the Law of Karma will certainly help the people in dealing with the current, difficult situation. People are being tested in many ways. The first way is how people react when they remain locked down in their houses. The second way is how they react when they are afflicted with this deadly Corona Disease. The third way people are tested is how they help others in need when they are financially well off and healthy. The test will also be on the extent to which such persons decide to help others.

Let us first examine and try to understand as to what is Karma. It means an 'act' or some kind of 'action'. Physics teaches us that as per Newton's third law of motion "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction". In *The Key to Theosophy*, Madam Blavatsky defines Karma as "the Ultimate Law of the Universe, the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout nature. Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. As no cause remains without its due effect from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand, and as like produces like, karma is that unseen and unknown law which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer. Though itself unknowable, its action is perceivable".

The earth whispered, spoke and screamed over the last several decades but human beings did not listen. There were frequent floodings, destructive fires, horrible hurricanes and terrifying tornadoes but we did not listen. We did not pay attention to the cries of the pigs and chicken in slaughter houses, the wailings of the birds in the cages and the environment polluted by emissions resulting from industry, excessive land, air and sea

travel and the conditions of sea life dying due to pollutants in the waters. The Corona was the reaction, resulting from all the above listed action. The group karma would be applicable to groups belonging to an organization, a company, a caste, a community, a religion, a country and a planet!! The individual's share in this karma is interwoven with one's personal karma. Considering that each action is bound by karma, every action will have its effect. I am sure we can now understand how the Corona situation is the effect of group karma of this world. It was a group karma, the effects of which we are facing now and suffering from Corona.

Madam Blavatsky writes in *The Key to Theosophy* about a situation of collective suffering as we are enduring due to Corona at present. "It is held as a truth among Theosophists that the interdependence of humanity is the cause of what is called distributive karma, and it is this law which affords the solution to the great question of collective suffering and its relief. It is an occults law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin nor suffer the effects of sin alone". In reality, there is no such thing as 'separateness'. This brings us to the very root of Theosophy – the oneness of all beings.

In times like this, we all should help one another. We should live by each other's happiness, not misery. We should not hate and despise one another. In this world, there is room for every one and the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone. But we have lost the way. Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into bloodshed. We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery we need humanity, more than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities life will be violent and will be lost. The television and cell phone have brought us together but these inventions cry out for universal brotherhood for the unity of us all. All people have the power to create happiness, to make life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure. Then in the name of universal brotherhood let us all unite and fight for a new world—a world which will give men an equal chance to work, to do away with greed, hate and intolerance, to create a world with reason and a world where science and progress will lead to happiness of all. That will be a step forward in our life.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO THE INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION

(As part of the Theosophical Society Adyar International Convention held at the Indian Section National Headquarters in Varanasi, India, on 1 January 2020)

Often on New Year's day we pay a great deal of attention to our thoughts for the future. It is also an opportunity to take time to consider the past that has brought us here. At this moment in India we stand in advance of much of the rest of the world, who have yet to reach the midnight hour. It is a time when we find globally people's minds and hearts are turned towards possibilities.

In all hearts there is the wish that this coming year may be one of greater happiness. Everyone wishes this for themselves and for their families, and friends, that in the coming year there will be a time when some of the insecurities and conflicts that seem so ever-present will diminish. These are the wishes of the *human* heart, that all things and beings may be at peace and feel secure. Into this pattern of wishing, many years ago came this Theosophical experiment. We call it an experiment because the results are still in the making.

In 1875 the Theosophical Society (TS) was founded in a very different world than the one we now inhabit. Although we all know it was founded in New York City, it was *only* when it was transplanted to the Indian soil that this movement truly took root and flourished. So in many ways, it is to India that the world owes a debt of gratitude for whatever this attempt we are making will bring into fruition.

When we look at what is before us in this coming year, to all but the most blind, we find that we are living in a world that is in a state of flux. If we just think back to the time of the TS's founding, India was ruled by Britain, a distant colonial power. Previously India's pattern had been one of various kingdoms. The hundreds of local Rajas ruling over different areas in India typified the governmental form of the planet in 1875, but things have changed. The TS and the world have witnessed dramatic changes in the way we relate to one another.

In the world today functional monarchies have ceased. Sometimes it has taken wars and great bloodshed to arrive at that point, but now the dominant governmental form globally is democracy, and even that is in a state of flux today. So what we *all* wish for is some sense of security — to feel beneath our feet some firm ground on which we can stand. This is a difficult moment for that. We would not be correct if we were to believe that the changes that are occurring in the broader world — the world we often describe as “the outer world” — do not affect us as members of the TS and as an organization.

We have the good fortune of having been exposed to something of great value. It has been named Theosophy, or the Ageless Wisdom. Its scope is necessarily beyond the capacity of our comprehension. What we *do* see and understand is that this Wisdom is something that can be applied. Its concepts, illumined by divinity, can be tested. In this moment in history there is a need, and within our TS we have a role in helping to define how the world will respond to this moment of great change.

The pattern for the next unfoldment in our shared human world has not yet been fully established. So it is incumbent on us to take this time to consider it. India plays such an important role, not only within the Theosophical movement, but within the world. The direction in which the consciousness of this nation and its members will move, the degree of insight into the nature of our interconnectedness will determine to a large measure what the immediate future holds for us all.

So at this time of a New Year, it will be well for us to commit to our
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deepest realization of these profound teachings, to engage in the process that leads us to a deeper possibility, a more potent expression. We would also be mistaken if we were to believe that there is some process that will lead us to enlightenment; no such thing exists. But there *is* a process that will make us more usable, more transparent to that deeper presence that was the source of this Society's founding.

There is a great work to do. The Indian Section can hold a major role in how this all unfolds. But the Indian Section, as you are all aware, is a name for a collection, an aggregate of each and every one of you. Each individual consciousness will determine what the Indian consciousness will reveal. It is a time of responsibility and of recognition that we are here for a purpose. In that recognition hopefully there comes an acceptance, and with that acceptance comes a renewed energy. There are beautiful truths that are embodied in what we have come to know as Theosophy — illuminating, energizing, strengthening truths. Let us try to move a little nearer.

Since coming to Varanasi at this time of unusual cold, one of the things I have appreciated greatly has been the experience of moving closer to warmth during my time here. I have seen various little fires around the campus that people have lit to stay warm. And somehow, with my own sense of coldness, the people standing next to the fire were the ones I wanted to talk to, because it would put me next to that same flame (Laughter) — selfish, I know.

The situation is the same for anybody who finds themselves enflamed by a genuine connection with these teachings, not just a repetition of what other Great Beings have said about *their* connections. It is *our* connection to make. We make it by first approaching those who are closest to the warming fires of Truth. As we become warm, others will become equally attracted to us; that is the goal. It is simply put because it *is*, in fact, that simple.

So during the course of the Convention, it is my hope for this New Year that the Indian Section, this place from which the Theosophical movement has grown, will experience a renewed life, a renewed light, and a new

sense of the presence of those Great Ones who, if they were to experience frustration in the way that we do, might be very frustrated with our Theosophical movement. Fortunately, They are not prone to such limited expressions.

May those Great Ones who stand behind this movement make their presence increasingly felt because *we* make ourselves worthy of that presence, not by calling out their name, but by coming to resemble the nature of their being — *that* is what is attractive.

So for us all, happy New Year, prosperity, blessings, abundance, health, healing to ourselves and to this world that is *so* greatly in need of the little that we have to give. Let us be generous with the little that we have.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, April, 2020)

**If ye realize the Emptiness of All Things,
Compassion will raise within your heart;
If ye lose all differentiation between yourselves and others,
fit to serve others ye will be;
And when in serving others ye shall win success,
then shall ye meet with me;
And finding me,
ye shall attain to Buddhahood.**

Milarepa
Songs of Milarepa

MEETING DEATH AS A FRIEND

ONE of the most famous Dialogues of Plato, which has attracted more attention than any other, is that in which he depicts the death of Socrates. There were a few friends present during the day, the evening of which saw his passing, and this Dialogue takes the form of a conversation taking place on that last day. It started with arguments on the pre-existence of the soul, in the course of which different ideas were advanced with regard to its nature. This part of the discussion ends in the affirmation of its immortality. The points discussed seem to me to be well worth considering by us, even today.

As his friends entered the prison, Socrates was seen rubbing his leg, which had just been freed from its bonds. The remarkable thing about his conduct, as he met his friends, was that he did not make any complaints; there was no particle of pitying his own condition; he just remarked on the extraordinary alternation and connection between pleasure and pain in life. He said that till then there had been an experience of pain, but now that he was freed from the bonds, immediately there was pleasure. If any one of us had been in his situation, I wonder what kind of feelings or thoughts we would have entertained on such an occasion.

Of course, Socrates was anticipating his death. Then the conversation proceeds and various ideas are exchanged, and when the time came towards the evening, he received the cup of poison that he was to drink, readily and calmly, it is said, in the easiest and gentlest possible manner. When it takes effect he coolly describes the advance of death over his

N. Sri Ram (15.12.1889 – 8.4.1973) was the 5th international President of the TS, Adyar, since 1953 until his passing. Reprinted from *Seeking Wisdom*, ch. 5, with some minor modifications of the original language made by the TS in America to make it relevant to present times.

body, from the feet upwards, stage by stage. It is quite an extraordinary scene; there is no account of any event quite like that.

Apparently the conversation went on for hours. After discussing the nature of the soul, Socrates explains what are the ends sought by a true philosopher, and why death is welcome to him. The statements made are not assertions but merely a discussion of ideas, of possibilities, and inferences to be drawn from them.

The suggestion was put forward by one of the friends that the soul may be conceived to be of the nature of harmony. If the body can be compared to a lyre or lute, the soul could be the music produced by it. This view, though it invests the soul with a dignity and nature which can possess both depth and beauty, does not give it an independent status. The view advanced seemed to propound what one would call an epiphenomenalist theory, that is, the body is the actuality, various activities take place in it, particularly those of the brain; and the soul, though possessing a nature of harmony, is merely a product of those activities, perhaps only of such of them as could conduce to this result. But when the instrument is broken there would be no more music. There was objection on these lines.

Another idea put forward, of a similar nature, suggested the mechanical analogy of a fire. One might think of the fire as the consciousness in man, animating the body; when the body is dissolved, the fire is extinct. This idea is like the thinking in the Southern School of Buddhists, but they would probably say it is fire mixed with smoke, which is dissipated.

These arguments are not without interest. When we consider how things could be, whether a particular view is warranted, what view can reasonably be taken, then the traversing of such ground is not without instruction and value.

In Nature so many things take place, like the rising and the setting of the sun, in a way which is the contrary of the actual facts. The argument that the soul or the mind — for the moment putting the two together — is merely a kind of image reflected from activities in the material field of the

brain, though plausible, may also be contradictory of the facts. What seems to be the case at first sight may not be the basic or underlying truth.

Socrates overcomes the objections to the idea of the soul being immortal. As a matter of fact, in another Dialogue Plato singles out these objections as being at the root of all “irreligious philosophizing”, though he was so logical that he could not have assumed that what is seemingly religious is true. What is true may be considered religious, but what is in accordance with religion as it happens to be, may not be true.

The arguments advanced for pre-existence of the soul are ideas which have since become famous as part of the Platonic philosophy. There was reference to the ancient belief that a soul which is born into this world has come back from another world to which we go at death. Of course that is a concept widely accepted in India, but it also existed in ancient thought among other peoples. The suggestion was that the dead come from the living; the living come from the dead. It is a phenomenon of cyclic occurrence, like sleeping, waking, and sleeping again, and is in accordance with the truth or rule in Nature that opposites are generated from one another. Dying and being born are a pair of opposites. But how they are linked, so that the one event brings the other in its train, was apparently not gone into further. Plato has a way of sometimes throwing out an idea that is deeply suggestive and arresting, and then leaving it to others to pursue it further by themselves.

Another argument referred to an idea which Socrates had previously propounded, that all real knowledge is reminiscence, a remembrance in the physical brain. The soul must have existed and had knowledge of a particular type, before it was united with the body, and the evidence for this is that we understand such things as justice, beauty, equality of spirit, and so on, and these ideas are not derived from sense-perceptions. Therefore, these must have been already within the knowledge of the soul. Sense-perceptions — the hearing of sounds, seeing that something is red or black, that something else is tall or short — are all comparative ideas. Merely from these perceptions one cannot develop ideas of beauty, justice, morality,

and so forth. Therefore, such knowledge and ideas must have a different source. Further, if the soul existed previous to birth and independently, then it cannot die with the body.

Socrates also expressed the view that the soul cannot have a nature which is compounded of several factors, for then its condition would change. It must have a nature which is unchanging. Even though one soul may be more developed than another, their essential nature must be the same. A compound of varying factors or elements is liable to change, whereas that which is simple, monadic, must remain essentially the same.

The further statement was made that whatever its other attributes, the soul must have a nature of life. It cannot be an abstraction, a projection of the mind. This linking of life and soul, obviously important in the series of ideas put forward, was capped by the statement that the soul must be of the same nature as the Deity to warrant belief in its immortality. Only the Divine can be immortal, and that which is not Divine must be mortal.

Socrates then exhorts his friends to acquire virtue and wisdom in this life. The moment of his death was approaching, but he continued to talk freely and easily as he might on any other day of his life. He said: “The genuine philosopher is one whose mind is directed to truth and virtue.” The word “philosopher”, and also the word “philosophy”, have become rather changed in their meaning since those old days. Nowadays we think a philosopher is one who analyzes and argues at great length, sometimes endlessly, his particular thesis; the life he lives has nothing to do with his intellectual skill and activity; but this was not the view taken of old. In the literal meaning of the word, philosophy is *love* of truth, and love always implies action. Truth, if its nature is such as to evoke love, must make an important change in oneself, turning one’s interest from things of the sense, which are ephemeral, mere enjoyment and pleasure, to things noble and true. That was the ancient concept of a philosopher. Because his mind is directed to truth and wisdom, the philosopher, said Socrates, is one “who is willing and ready to die”. Therefore, death is not unwelcome to him. That is how he explained his cheerfulness at the prospect of departing from this world.

But he also said, it is not right to commit suicide. His argument against suicide is rather curious: In this world we are in a kind of prison, living under great limitations. It is a world in which ignorance predominates rather than wisdom. But we must not escape from it before we are given permission to do so. The exit from the prison may be exceedingly welcome, but we should not take it upon ourselves to abscond. The statement was also made that one has no proprietary right over his body. This would not be the general view held by most people. But we have the responsibility of using the body rightly and maintaining it in good condition, which is precisely the view expressed in *At the Feet of the Master*.

Because death is welcome, and the mind is directed towards truth and virtue by the philosopher, for such a person philosophy becomes really a preparation for death—a striking idea. Some scholars have interpreted the Greek words as meaning, “Philosophy is really a meditation on death”, which does not seem to me to be in consonance with Socrates’ easy way of taking it. Another rendering is much more understandable, namely, when the life is properly lived, directed towards those ends which are the ends of the soul (not the desires of the body), then philosophy or “the life of a philosopher is but one long rehearsal of dying”. One may live a happy life, but it can also be a process of death — which may need explanation.

Socrates explains that the multitude, the common folk, is ignorant of the sense in which the philosopher welcomes death. It does not mean that he wants to get rid of the body, but he has a friendly feeling towards death. He has this feeling because he sets no great store on the gratification of the physical appetites. Most people estimate the value of things by the pleasure which they afford, but the aim of the philosopher is to free himself as much as possible from the domination of the body. He is engaged in tending the soul, giving attention to those matters which are of interest to the soul, such as truth, virtue, and so on. In so doing, the philosopher has already separated himself from the body. As he has given up all attachment to the pleasures which come to a person through the body, death is nothing but an exit through an open door. The things which nourish the soul are the right, the good, the true, the beautiful, and so on. Socrates said: “He nearly

approaches to death who cares nothing for the pleasures through the body.” One may enjoy the pleasures that come while they are there, but need not hanker for them. By dismissing them from the field of one’s concern and interest, one most nearly approaches death. It is in that sense that the philosopher desires death, even while he is alive. This is akin to J. Krishnamurti’s teaching, although he does not speak of death as a welcome exit, but of dying here and now to one’s past and all experience as it comes. The philosopher whose interest is centred in virtue and wisdom thereby purifies his intelligence, so that it is free of all taint, of every alien element. It is the purification of one’s whole nature which brings about one’s spiritual independence, and that is the real freedom or *mukti*. *Mukti* is not literally be the merging of the human spirit in the Logos, the human being has to free himself from bonds or attachments.

To express the same truth in another way: it is really the discarding of one’s past, of all attachments arising from it, that changes a person into a new Being. The entity which is functioning at present is a creature of the past, he has come along a line of continuity, and he has within his nature and constitution many things derived from his past and its experiences. To be transformed into a new being is to be clear of the past, so that it no longer dominates, eclipses, or directs the present.

This kind of dying makes life really more vital, less clogged and burdened, so that all perceptions are more acute, and the intelligence becomes intense, concentrated and flame-like. It is in a state of purity within oneself that one attains the highest quality in the functioning of every aspect of his Being. Every substance in its pure state exhibits its full potency.

The statement was casually made that philosophy is the highest music. Socrates said that he had a persistent dream in which he was told to apply himself to music, and as he understood that philosophy is the highest music, he was devoting himself to philosophy. The concept of philosophy being the highest kind of music becomes clearer in the light of the statement made previously with regard to the nature of the soul as being a form of harmony. The objection previously raised, that when the instrument is

broken there can no longer be any music, was met by Socrates with the remark that the soul may exist, although it may or may not have an instrument. It is rather interesting that in one of the lectures which Dr Annie Besant gave in her atheistic days, she used precisely this simile. She said that though the lyre is broken, the music may still be in existence.

Socrates put forward as a reason for being willing to die, that we would be well off where we go, under good masters and with friends. People like to be in congenial surroundings. If people have really devoted their life to philosophy, they may be sure that they would be well placed. They will be happy in proportion to the purity of their mind, which is also an important truth.

Happiness is not to be confused with pleasure; it comes from purity of mind and heart and arises naturally; we do not need to seek it at all. So Socrates said that if individuals have devoted themselves to virtue and wisdom, they may entertain the firm hope that the greatest good will befall them in the other world, which is in accordance with the teachings in theosophical books.

There was one other point made which is worthy of note. If we are ever to know the nature of anything in its essence, know the very truth of it and not merely the form, the appearance, the outer wrapping, we must be separated from the body and contemplate the things themselves by the mere soul. It is only the soul-vision, knowledge of the soul, which can give the essence of truth with regard to anything in existence. The *Bhagavadgītā* refers to “the knowers of the essence of things”. The essential quality of a thing being what makes it different from everything else. The essence, the thing in itself, can be known only through the soul, and never through the senses. While we live we approach nearest to the knowledge of that essence when we hold no intercourse or communion at all with the body, except for what absolute necessity requires; that is, when we cease to be dependent upon the body, to be influenced by its appetites, urges and passions. In other words, the whole aim and study in philosophy in the old meaning of that word, is the deliverance and separation of the soul from the

body, and this can be attempted and achieved even while a person is living in this world. It is not something which has to take place by a process of Nature, but can be brought about through one’s own clear intelligence.

When there is freedom from dependence on the body, when this change comes about in its completeness, then death and life are the same to the real man, the real man being the soul; whether he lives or dies makes no difference to him. This also reminds one of the sentence in the *Gītā*: “The wise grieve neither for the living, nor for the dead.” That is to say, there is the possibility of coming to an internal condition or state in which whether life is lived in the physical body, which has been called a prison, or outside that prison, it is all the same. The soul uses the body as an instrument, without attachment to it.

This particular Dialogue is full of illuminating ideas to everyone who tries to understand these matters: the nature of the soul, of life in this world, the ends most worth striving after, the new meaning which death can acquire, and the possibility of facing this event with coolness and even welcoming it.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, April, 2020)

**When you come back inside my chest
no matter how far I’ve wandered off,
I look around and see the way.**

**At the end of my life,
with just one breath left,
if you come then, I’ll sit up and sing.**

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi

FREEDOM FROM THE SELF

The theme of our Convention is “Nurturing the Divine Seed”. Anything that is not the creation of man or his thoughts is a manifestation of the Divine. So the whole of Nature — including our universe, our own planet, the rivers and mountains, the animals, and, of course, all of us — are the manifestation of the Divine, because we are not created by human thought. The Divine has tremendous order, what we call “the Cosmic Order”, which is governed by very definite laws that are universal and timeless.

Those are the laws that scientists study. They tell us the way that the universal intelligence of Nature operates. If we ask the scientist, “Why are these the laws, why are there laws at all, and why is Nature orderly?”, they would say: “We don’t know, we are students of Nature and we find that it is extremely orderly in the sense that the same causes produce the same effects, and these laws tell us the relationship between the causes and effects.” They do not believe in universal intelligence, but the religious people have talked about consciousness being there first, and this universal intelligence guiding the entire cosmos, its creation, and development. It operates in our body too. Ten thousand things happen just right to keep the body in order; the only thing we do is eat some food and do some exercise. The order has no cause. It is when there is disorder, as ill-health, that then disorder has a cause.

Why does that order not operate in our consciousness? It does, but we have supplanted the intelligence of Nature with the intelligence of our

thoughts and imagination, both of which create a lot of illusions. We acquire a lot of notions from the environment in which we grow up, some of which are true and others quite illusory. It is the illusions that create disorder in consciousness in the form of division, conflict, and negative emotions which are elements of psychological suffering. The Buddha pointed out over 2,500 years ago that ignorance (as illusion) is responsible for creating sorrow, and it can be eliminated by discerning what is true and what is false, which is the quest for self-knowledge.

Illusions are just some constructs of thought which are not a part of Nature, but which we have accepted as true, and therefore they become true for us. For instance, if you grow up in India you are assigned a caste. When a child is born it already has, not only the Hindu or Muslim religion, but it has a caste. Either it is born in a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Shudra, or Vaishya family. This was started some 3,000 years ago or so, because it is mentioned even in the *Bhagavadgitâ*. It may not have started in the form in which it exists today, but what exists today in society is the reality, it is perpetuating, and it divides society into several castes.

The whole thing is untrue! There is no difference between a Brahmin child and a Shudra child, but the Shudra is discriminated against, right from childhood. The scientist will tell you, “I can’t tell from studying the RNA or DNA structure of the chromosomes whether the child is a Brahmin or a Shudra”; there is no difference whatsoever. So it is completely false and extremely discriminatory, yet it perpetuates. Because the child grows up seeing this in operation, his mind gets infected with casteism, and he maintains it. So what is outside becomes what is inside him, and what is inside sustains the outside. Thus there is a tremendous inertia in society; society just replicates itself. That is why India is India and America is America, and so on. There also it replicates. So it is not easy to change that.

Yet, unless we enquire into what is true and what is false, instead of just accepting what our culture is telling us, we are trapped in illusions, and such illusions differ from culture to culture. We get attached to our own

particular illusions, and that divides us from others. There are a lot of cultural illusions like this. For centuries men have felt that women are assistants for them, and that man is superior to woman — false! For centuries it has gone on. Human beings believed that kings were divine people and not subject to laws and so on, and so much atrocity was committed! So we are capable of all kinds of illusions, and from those illusions there comes a lot of cruelty. It is not seen as cruelty, because we say, “That’s our culture!” In the Islamic world, they keep the women hidden behind veils most of the time. In other cultures too they say “women can’t do this, can’t do that”, and so on. They just say, “It’s our culture!”, so they do not see the cruelty in it.

Similarly, the problem is that *all* of us have illusions in our minds. The difficulty is that the mind which is in illusion is not aware of its illusions. If it was aware of its illusions, the illusions would end. Hitler really believed that Jews should be eliminated and he would create a better world by eliminating them. He really believed that — false! So we must be very careful not to be too certain or dogmatic about *any* opinion. How do we know that something is the truth? It may not be, we may be deceiving or fooling ourselves.

Socrates said: “An unexamined life is not worth living.” Because, humanity needs the quest for self-knowledge, which is to distinguish between what is true and what is false, and not accept everything that our own mind tells us to be true. But we identify with our brain, our thoughts, and ideas, and we are too sure of them, and that creates division. The man in Pakistan is equally sure as the Indian, and that divides Indians and Pakistanis, though they were all one nation, together, a few decades ago.

Deeper than the cultural illusions are the psychological illusions, which the psychologists call “complexes”. They form because we have had certain traumatic experiences in childhood, which are held in memory, and they cause all kinds of fears or complexes in the mind. Those are also illusions; they lie deeper and so they are more difficult to erase. Finally, the sages say that the feeling of being a separate self, a separate ego, is also

false, that we are really one with Nature and the rest of it. We separate ourselves out through identifying with a particular land or a particular idea, a particular political belief, and so on. That is what makes us feel we are separate individuals.

So there *is* in our consciousness both the conditioned individual consciousness and the universal consciousness, which is the capacity for awareness. The latter has no structure; it is not your awareness or somebody else’s awareness — it is just awareness, the capacity which is part of the divine seed in us. The personality is the conditioned part of consciousness, resulting from where we were born and grew up, with what notions around us, and so on. If we are too attached to the personality, that constitutes the ego.

The personality by itself is not the ego, it is a fact. I cannot erase all those memories in my brain which are there, so they have a structure. After all, I learned physics, I do not know biology. So that is there, in my brain, but the pride that we get from it, the status that we derive from it — all that is our own doing. Otherwise, just as our body has a certain skin colour and shape, our minds or thoughts or knowledge have certain shapes, certain limits; that is a fact. The attachment to that, the ownership of that, and the feeling that everything that our mind tells us is true, *that* is where the problem lies. So *to know that we do not know* is the highest wisdom, and that is the beginning of learning.

J. Krishnamurti taught us that the learning mind is the true religious mind; not the learning of knowledge and skills we acquire in the university, which is cumulative learning, but learning to discern what is true and what is false is called self-knowledge; It is really unlearning the false not just intellectually, but through perception. When we perceive the false as the false, it drops away, it disappears; thus the illusion can be ended. That is why Theosophy was called “The Wisdom Religion”, because self-knowledge is the key to wisdom rather than just carrying all these illusions of one’s own culture.

If we do that, then we come upon the Universal Brotherhood of humanity as a fact, which is the first Object of the Theosophical Society. As long as we are divided from our fellow human beings on the basis of religion, caste, ideology, and so forth, the other is not your brother. We may think it is good to be brotherly, but we are really not brotherly. To *be* brotherly, we have to free ourselves of this division which arises in our minds — it arises through the process of identification with a fragment. When we work on it and free ourselves of it, then we will see that other human beings are essentially ourselves. This means they are just like us, similar, having the same kind of body and consciousness. Their desires may be different from our desires, but they have desires and so do we. Likewise, their fears may be different from ours, but we also have fears, and so on. We are absolutely alike — “other people are ourselves” is what the Buddha taught.

Why does this not become a reality for us? Because the mind is full of all these illusions which divide us. That is why the quest for Truth is the very essence of religion. The rest of it is cultural: how we worship, what books we read, how and where we chant, whether in the mosque or the temple, those are all cultural details. But the quest for Truth, which started right from the time of the Upanishads, has been our legacy through religion. That is the essence of true religion, because it brings us to freedom from illusion, and the greatest illusion is the ego in the human being. When the mind identifies itself with the personality, it starts operating as a personal lawyer seeking security and profit for the personality and ceases to be in quest of truth.

The one central illusion of all humanity is that it thinks it is in its interest to be egoistic, that the ego is bringing us profit, protecting us, and so on. It is not true; the ego is the greatest cause of all disorder in one's own life and in the world. But when we have this feeling that it is our protector, our friend, then it is sustained. The day we perceive the danger of the ego, it will drop away, because it is not a reality, like our organs. It is not created by Nature, it arises from the manner in which we approach life. Our house or spouse does not create the ego. It is we who approach them egoistically.

The ego is really a beggar, always seeking something for itself in every relationship. So not to approach life like a beggar, not to cultivate relationships on the basis of “I want this or that”, is the key. Kahlil Gibran writes in *The Prophet*, in the chapter “On Friendship” :

Let there be no purpose in friendship save
the deepening of the spirit.
For love that seeks ought but the disclosure
of its own mystery is not love,
but a net that is cast forth: and only the
unprofitable is caught!

The Prophet is saying it is unprofitable, although we think it is profitable. It is unprofitable because, as long as we are approaching friendship, which means any relationship, in that way, we will never know what Love is. So another of Krishnamurti's statements is: “Come upon Love, and then do what you will, it will be right.” But he defines Love as “where the self is not”, which is not love as society understands it. That means there is no self-interest or motive for profit with which one is approaching that relationship.

So, can one be a friend like that, a true friend, to the tree, to the cow, to the river, to oneself, not demanding, not judging, not suppressing, but learning about it? Life is a mystery to be learned about, and not a problem to be solved. So, friends, as theosophists, that is the challenge that we have: Can we end the disorder in our consciousness? That is the only way that it can end in our relationships, and therefore out there in society.

It is an illusion to think that a new Messiah, a new Prime Minister, a better political system, or new laws will bring about peace, happiness, and prosperity. There is nothing wrong with the Messiahs that we have had; but we are unable to learn from them. This is because this is not something we can learn from another, however great that person may be. There was a philosopher called Matsuo Basho in 17th-century Japan who said: “Do not

seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise. Seek what they sought.” How do we come upon that wisdom? We will have to discover for ourselves what the Buddha, Jesus, or others discovered. It begins with freedom from the past. They broke away from the past; that was what was extraordinary about these people.

But if we are completely trapped in the ideas of the past, coming either from our experience or knowledge, then we are in a small little prison, because our individual experiences and knowledge are so limited compared to *all* the knowledge that is there. If we completely identify with just this limited set, we are inside a prison, but we do not know it, and we feel safe inside that prison. It is a false sense of security because that is what is creating all the chaos, cruelty, and danger in the world. That is why the greatest human illusion is thinking that acting out of self-interest is in our self-interest; it is not!

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, April, 2020)

A human being is a part of the whole, called by us “Universe”, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts, and feelings as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. The striving to free oneself from this delusion is the one issue of true religion. Not to nourish the delusion, but to try to overcome it is the way to reach the attainable measure of peace of mind.

Albert Einstein

NEWS AND NOTES

Assam

The National Conference of T.S. & T.O.S. was held at Nalbari District of Assam on 15 & 16 February 2020. The conference on 15 February started at 8am with registration of delegates. It was followed by the hoisting of T.S. Flag by the Chief Guest Bro. Chittaranjan Satapathy, former Vice-President, Theosophical Society. Then, the prayers of all religions were held along with the Universal Prayer led by Bro. Gokul Ch. Deka, President of Assam Theosophical Federation. After lighting of the lamp by the Chief Guest the welcome address was delivered by Bro. G.C. Deka. Greetings were read out by Vice-President Dr. C.P. Bhuyan. Sis. Shristi Sandilya chanted a *sloka* from Geeta. Bro. Chittaranjan Satapathy delivered a talk on the theme “Theosophy- The road to freedom”. Then, the Federation Secretaries - Sis. Nilima Das from Assam Federation, Dr. Jayashree Das from Bengal Federation, Dr. Raj Kishore Prasad from Bihar Federation and Sis. Purnamasi Pattnaik from Utkal Federation presented their Annual Activity Report and this session was chaired by Bro. Raghunath Chaudhury. In the post-lunch session a talk was delivered by Bro. Dharendra, Nath Chakraborty, former President of Assam Theosophical Federation. It was followed by a symposium on the theme “Theosophy - The Road to Freedom” and the session was chaired by the National Lecturer Dr. Bipul Sarma. The speakers were- Dr. Nakul Deka from Assam Federation, Dr. Jayashree Das from Bengal Federation, Bro. S.P. Srivastava from Bihar Federation and Sis. Purnamasi Pattnaik from Utkal Federation. A Souvenir and Annual Journal *Jnan-Jeuti*, 2020, were also released by the Chief Guest Bro. Chittaranjan Satapathy. It has been published by Assam Theosophical Federation and edited by Sis. Nilima Das. The Annual Journal ‘Antarjyoti’ of Upper Assam Theosophical Coordination Committee edited by Bro. Prabin Ch. Sarmah was also released on this occasion. A cultural programme was held at night in which songs and dance were presented and the programme was conducted by Bro. Nani Gopal Goswami.

The programme on the second day (16 Feb.) started at 9am, with short talks on the theme “Awakening of the Divine Spark Within”, and the session was chaired by the National Lecturer Bro. Pradip Kr. Mahapatra. The speakers were Dr. Raj Kishore Prasad from Bihar Federation, Dr. Bipul Sarma from Assam Federation, Dr. Sudhansu Shekhar from Utkal Federation and Dr. Jayashree Das from Bengal Federation.

The programme of the Theosophical Order of Service was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Bro. K. Shiva Prasad, National Secretary, T.O.S. India. He was introduced by Bro. Hirambeswar Kotoki, Secretary T.O.S. Assam region. After the Universal Prayer led by Bro. K.S. Lahkar, President of T.O.S. Assam region, there was a programme of flute recital by Sis. Binu Devi. The Chief Guest Bro. K. Shiva Prasad delivered a talk on the theme ‘Service before Self’. Activity reports of the T.O.S. were presented by the Secretaries of each Federation - Bro. Hirambeswar Kotoki from Assam Federation, Bro. Gangaram Hajra from Bengal Federation, Bro. R.K. Prasad from Bihar Federation and Bro. B.K. Pattnaik from Utkal Federation. Samarpan Dhyana Meditation was conducted in the post-lunch session by Bro. Ranganathan Baruah and Bro. Anil Kr. Baruah. Then, a symposium was held on the theme ‘Right of Animals’ and the session was chaired By Bro. Raghunath Choudhury. The participants were Bro. Ramesh Ch. Mahanta from Assam Federation, Bro. Gangaram Hajra from Bengal Federation, Bro Raj Kishore Prasad from Bihar Federation and Sis. Mitalini Mahapatra from Utkal Federation.

In the evening kits were distributed among the poor students and a poor young widow. English Dictionary and other necessary books were given to the poor students and a sewing machine was given to Sis. Jonali Barman, a young poor widow. A talk was delivered by Bro. Jagannath Patgiri on ‘Value Based Education & Health Care Education’. Vote of Thanks was given by Bro. Kiran Ch. Buragohain, Joint Secretary of A.T.F. It was followed by *Santi Path* by Bro. Iswar Goswami. The conference concluded with a cultural programme conducted at night by Bro. Nani Gopal Goswami.

Rayalaseema

Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed by some members at their residence. These members were of the following three Lodges - Jnana Bharathi, Rayadurgam, and Amarapuram.

Skype study of the book *The Key to Theosophy* was conducted daily by Bro. N.C. Krishna from 10 to 11 a.m. and it was hosted by Sis. Mamta. Skype study on *Isis Unveiled* was conducted on Wednesday and Saturday.

Besides, the Federation conducted resource persons’ meet through Skype on ‘Study of Theosophy- its effects’. Ten members attended it and it was hosted by the Federation’s Joint Secretary Bro. Narayana Rao.

Utkal

The 55th Annual Conference of the TS and TOS of Utkal Theosophical Federation was held on 8 and 9 February 2020 in the UTF Hall, 346, Gautam Nagar, Bhubaneswar. The theme of the Conference was ‘Self Transformation and Global Peace’. Prof C A Shinde, Librarian, Adyar Library and Research Centre and International Lecturer, was the Chief Guest.

The Theosophical flag was hoisted by the Chief Guest on 8 February and it was followed with prayers of all religions. Sis Purnamasi Pattnaik, Secretary of the Utkal Federation, delivered the welcome address and read out the greetings received from various Federations and members of TS and TOS. The inaugural address was delivered by the Chief Guest Prof Shinde. Prof Sahadeb Patro, President, UTF, gave the introductory address. Thereafter, a session of short talks on the theme “Discovery of Inner Self” was held in which the speakers were Bro. R C Pattnaik, Bro. Ashok Pattnaik, Bro. B.S Mohanty and Bro. Partha Sarathi Prasad Sarangi. A symposium on ‘Awakening the Self for Universal Service’ was held in the afternoon. Bro Ashok Ku Mohapatra, Bro. Ashis Ku Kar, Bro. Satyabrata Rath, Sis. Mitalini Mahapatra, and Bro. S S Pati spoke on the subject.

Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, former International Vice President and
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now President of Cuttack Lodge, delivered the Theosophy-Science Lecture on '*Gaveshana and Vipashyana*'. Bro. R C Pattnaik, President, TSRA, BBSR, presided over the meeting.

The Chief Guest Prof C .A. Shinde delivered a public lecture in the evening and the subject of his talk was 'The Book of Life'. The conference on the 1st day concluded with a cultural programme with devotional songs presented by the members of UTF.

A seminar was organized on the second day of the conference on the theme 'Brotherhood is a fact in Nature'. Bro Pradip Kr. Mahapatra, Prof. Sahadeb Patro, Bro. K P. Padhy, Bro Pramod Ch. Mishra participated in it and expressed their views on the subject.

Sis. Tapaswini Samantray, Sis. Krishna Priya Prusty, Sis. Barsha Rani Behera spoke in the Youth Seminar on the subject 'Ancient Wisdom and Modern Youth'. Bro. Ashutosh Pati chaired this session and introduced the theme.

The following members were elected as office bearers of the Federation for the years 2020, 2021 & 2022:

1. President-Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, (Cuttack Lodge)
2. Vice-President-Bro.P K Mahapatra, (Siddhartha Lodge)
3. Secretary-Sis.Paurnamasi Pattnaik, (Maru Lodge)
4. Jt.Secretary-Bro.Ashok Pattnaik, (Bhubaneswar Lodge)
5. Treasurer-Bro.Braja Kumar Satapathy,(Debapi Lodge)
6. Members of the Executive Committee :
 - i) Bro. Jay Krishna Sahoo, (Cuttack Lodge),
 - ii) Bro. Alekha Chandra Mohanty, (Cuttack Lodge)
 - iii) Bro. Ashok Kumar Mohapatra, (Laxmi Narayan Lodge)

iv) Bro. Pramod Ch. Mishra, (Laxmi Narayan Lodge)

v) Bro. Guru Prasad Pattnaik, (Bhubaneswar Lodge)

vi) Sis. Mitalini Mahapatra, (Siddhartha Lodge)

vii) Sis. Bandana Panda, (Bhubaneswar Lodge)

viii) Bro. S S Pati, (Cuttack Lodge)

ix) Bro. Praffula Kumar Das, (Laxmi Narayan Lodge)

x) Sis. Swarnalata Das, (Bhubaneswar Lodge)

xi) Bro. R C Pattnaik, Ex -Officio Member (Council Member)

xii) Bro. Satyabrata Rath, Ex -Officio Member (Council Member)

Bro. Choudhury Gourahari Mishra, Vice-President, Divine Life Society, Khandagiri, BBSR was the Chief Guest of the TOS Session and he delivered a talk on the 'Path to Self Transformation'. Dr. Deepa Padhi, International Vice-President (TS) and President of TOS Odisha Region, presided over the meeting and gave the introductory address. Prof C A Shinde delivered the Keynote Address on the theme of the conference. Sri Nihar Ranjan Panda, a prominent Social Worker, was felicitated with 'Besant Selfless Service Awards'. Besides, Certificates were distributed to the successful trainees of the Tailoring Institute run by the Mahabharata TOS Group. Wheelchair and stretcher were donated to two physically disabled persons. TOS lecture on the theme were given by Shakeel Ahamed and Sourav Sampat Nag. Bro Pranab Mishra chaired the session and the TOS session concluded with the vote of thanks given by Bro Satyabrata Rath.

In the evening, Prof C A Shinde delivered a public lecture on 'Realising the Web of Life'. The meeting was presided over by the President, UTF, Dr. Chittaranjan Satapathy. The conference concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Bro. K P Padhi, President of Bhubaneswar Lodge.

Other Activities

Dr R C Rath Memorial Study Class on the book *The Book of Life* was conducted by Prof. C. A. Shinde from 10-12 Feb.

Adyar Day' was observed on 17 Feb. in the UTF Hall. Bro. Ashok Kumar Mohapatra, Bro. Ashok Patnaik and Bro. Satyabrata Rath spoke on this occasion on the significance of Adyar Day.

The following talks were organized by Cuttack Lodge in February. Prof. Chinmayee Mohapatra gave a talk on '*Muktira Paribhasha*'. Prof. Partha Sarangi spoke on 'Deeper Aspects of Life'. Mrs. Reena Mohanty from Mumbai gave a lecture – cum- demonstration on 'Sahaja Yoga'. Bro. S.S. Pati gave a public talk on 'Awakening the Divine Spark Within'. During the study classes held from Monday to Thursday afternoon, the members studied 'The Golden Book of Wisdom Teachings' and 'The Eight Fold Way'.

The members of Barabati Lodge organized a public propagation programme on Theosophy in Amrit Devi Women's College, Cuttack. It was held on 22 January and the topic was 'Oneness of Life'. Prof. Sahadeb Patro, Bro. P K Mahapatra, Bro. Patanjali Tripathy, Vice -President Barabati Lodge, Sis Mitalini Mahapatra, Sis Purnamasi Pattnaik, Bro. Ashok Patnaik and Bro. S S Pati delivered talks on the subject from different angles of theosophy. Around 300 Students and teachers were present in the meeting. Adyar Day was also celebrated by the members of Barabati Lodge.

A special meeting was conducted in observance of 'Mahasivaratri' on 21 Feb. Prof Sahadeb Patro, former President, UTF, delivered a talk on this occasion in which he spoke on 'Siva Tattwa' with reference to Kashmir Shaivism attributed to Lord Shiva - the 1st Logos of the Trinity in Theosophy as against 3rd Logos in popular Hindu beliefs. The programme was attended by the members as well as non -members.

Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed in the month of February and the first week of March at Siddharth Lodge. It was held on every Monday from 4-6 PM and then it was followed by the study of the book "*Srigurucharane*".

The study was conducted for the new members in the UTF Hall.

Debapi Lodge organized a programme on Vipassana Meditation in the Club House of Z1 Apartment Complex, Patia. Sis. Tanuja Mishra conducted it on 2 March 2020 and it was preceded by the nuance, the matrix and dynamics of Buddhist meditation elucidated by Prof Sahadeb Patro. Around 50 members of the community attended the programme.

The Theosophic life must be a life of service. Unless we are serving, we have no right to live. We live by the constant sacrifice of other lives on every side, and we must pay it back; otherwise to use an ancient phrase, we are but thieves and do not repay the gift. Service is the great illuminator. The more we serve the wiser we become, for we learn wisdom not by studying but by living. There is a sense in which the saying is perfectly true: "He who doeth the will shall know of the doctrine". To live the life of service clears the mental atmosphere of the distorting fogs of prejudice, passion, temperament. Service alone makes the eye single, so that the whole body is full of light, and only those who serve are those who truly live.

**Annie Besant,
*The Theosophic Life***

GOALS FOR — 2019-2020

Indian Section Headquarters

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| 1. To conduct a goal setting meet at Varanasi for the Presidents and Secretaries of all the Federations. | 100 |
| 2. To organize the 144 th International Convention from Dec. 31 to Jan.5. | 100 |
| 3. To organize five workers' training camps in the North, East, South, West and Central India. | |
| 4. To conduct three-day Youth Camp at Varanasi from 04 to 06, September, 2020, with free board & lodging. Rs 500 for food and Transportation will be borne by the Federation. Every Federation will send at least three youth for this camp. | |
| 5. To reprint at least ten more Theosophical Books after the six done last year. | |
| 6. To construct Amphitheatre with a capacity of 1200 for our four educational institutions. | 100 |
| 7. To increase the rate of generation of a surplus from Rs 1 Crore to Rs 1.5 Crore by October, 2020. | |
| 8. To organize to translate the book " <i>The Hidden Side of Lodge Meetings</i> " by C.W. Leadbeater in Hindi and Kannada. Get 200 copies printed in each language for the functioning of lodges as requested by the Federations. | |
| 9. To organize a day-long National Level Orientation Seminar on Theosophy – Science and Occultism for the Presidents and Secretaries of all the Federations, just before the goal setting meet. | |

Assam Theosophical Federation

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| 1. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge. | |
| 2. To arrange visit to 15 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges. | |
| 3. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali with about 15 members from the Federation. | |

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| 4. To arrange visits of good speakers to four schools & four colleges. | |
| 5. To organize 12 essay competitions at school and college level. | |
| 6. To organize two one-day orientation camps for new members. | |
| 7. To conduct 15 study camps at Federation & Lodge level for the better understanding of Theosophy. | |
| 8. To organize five public talks for exposure of general public to Theosophy. | |
| 9. To translate and publish two Theosophical books in Assamese. | |
| 10. To increase the NET membership by 10 members. | |
| 11. To organize a National Conference on 15-16 February 2020. | |

Bengal Theosophical Federation

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| 1. To increase the NET membership by 10 members. | 50 |
| 2. To open one new lodge during this year. | |
| 3. To increase number of members attending our weekly study classes by 30 to 40. | |
| 4. To translate, publish and distribute two theosophical books in Bengali. | 50 |
| 5. To conduct 4 study classes by National Lecturers. | |
| 6. To activate one dormant Lodge/Centre by visiting and motivating workers & old members. | 50 |
| 7. To send at least 15 members for Bhowali study camp to be conducted by Bengal Theosophical Federation. | 50 |
| 8. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge. | 100 |
| 9. To arrange visit to 15 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges. | |

Bihar Theosophical Federation

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| 1. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge. | |
| 2. To participate in Theosophical meet in Assam with at least 10 members. | |

3. To arrange visit to 11 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.
4. To conduct a four-day study class at Bhowali in the last week of May-2020 with at least 20 members.
5. To conduct at least two public meetings to introduce theosophy to the people in order to attract new members.
6. To revive and activate at least two dormant Lodges.
7. To conduct 4 study classes of two or three days at the Federation & Lodge level.
8. To publish & distribute 500 copies of pamphlets on two Theosophical subjects in Hindi.
9. To publish a book in simple Hindi on basic Theosophy for the non-members & new members.
10. To increase the **NET** membership by 15 members.

Bombay Theosophical Federation

1. To increase the **NET** membership by 5 members.
2. To create and commission an E-Lodge network through efforts by Bro. Taral Munshi.
3. To ensure that Ananda Lodge will meet at least once in a month.
4. To encourage 20 Young & New Members to speak on Red Letter Days, Annual Session. 40
5. To conduct two "reach out programmes" on Theosophical themes, with students of schools and colleges. 100
6. To groom three second line workers. 100
7. To raise Rs 15 lakhs for TS activities from CSR funds.
8. To send at least ten members for the study camp at Bhowali, along with Gujarat Federation.
9. To organize one Study Camp by National Lecturer.
10. To arrange visit to 8 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.

Delhi Theosophical Federation

1. To publish 1000 pamphlets on introduction to Theosophy in Hindi for general public.

2. To arrange at least 6 lectures on Theosophical subjects at various schools and colleges of Delhi.
3. To increase the **NET** membership by **10** members.
4. To organize two study classes of two days' duration at the Lodge and Federation level.
5. To arrange a visit to 4 Lodges separately by Dr. N.C. Ramanujachary and Bro. U.S. Pandey.
6. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
7. To conduct a 3-day study camp at Bhowali in the month of June, 2020, with at least 10 members.

Gujarat Theosophical Federation

1. To organize one workers' training camp where delegates from lodges in western part of India (Marathi, Bombay and Gujarat) will participate.
2. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
3. To organize one 3-day study camp for at least 70 members at one location in order to activate members of the Lodge.
4. To reactivate two dormant lodges/centers by visiting and motivating workers and old members.
5. To publish one thousand pamphlets and two books each on five Theosophical subjects in Gujarati and distribute them to lodges and members.
6. To organize one youth camp, one elocution competition and three essay competitions to encourage youth activities.
7. To arrange visit to 15 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.
8. To increase the **NET** membership by **10** members.
9. To conduct a three-day study camp at Bhowali in the last week of May, 2020, with at least 35 members.

Karnataka Theosophical Federation

1. To popularize Theosophy amongst students through members who

are in Teaching line; organize one 4-day teachers' training camp according to syllabus relevant to students.

2. To organize ten lectures on Theosophical themes in schools and colleges.
3. To organize two 3-day Youth Camps at different places.
4. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
5. To organize 2- day Workers' Training Camp for the President and Secretary of all the Lodges in order to conduct uniform activities in their respective Lodges.
6. To activate two dormant Lodges.
7. To set-up libraries in five lodges and provide them books published by the Federation, free of cost.
8. To visit 25 Lodges individually by the President, Secretary and EC Members in order to strengthen the activities of the Lodge.
9. To conduct 8-day study camp at Adyar with 50 members.
10. To establish a Rs 2 lakhs Lodge Activity & Development Fund made out of voluntary donations.
11. To reprint and publish three Theosophical books in Kannada.
12. To sort out all discrepancies between the membership records of the Indian Section and Karnataka Federation by 15.01.2020.

Kerala Theosophical Federation

1. To organize one 'Wake Up India Youth Camp' in January 2020 with at least thirty students.
2. To organize two 'Reach Out Programmes' on Theosophical themes for interaction with the teachers and students.
3. To organize one Workers' Training Camp with at least thirty members.
4. To organize two Theosophical book exhibitions for 10 days each with the co-operation of public libraries & academies.
5. To publish one Theosophical book in Malayalam during this year.
6. To organize two Retreats/Study Camps in Kerala and Bhowali with at least 30 members in a camp.
7. To celebrate the 125th Birth Anniversary of J. Krishnamurti at two

places in Kerala by exhibiting books on J.K. and Theosophy.

8. To publish one pamphlet on J. Krishnamurti and Theosophical Society in English.
9. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
10. To arrange visit to 10 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.
11. To increase the **NET** membership by **10** members.

M.P. & Rajasthan Theosophical Federation

1. To increase the **NET** membership by 25 members.
2. To arrange at least 4 orientation sessions for NSS and Scout students at the Lodge level.
3. To arrange at least 6 "Yoga and Meditation Camps" at different lodges.
4. To conduct one study camp at Bhowali.
5. To conduct 5 Study Camps/Seminar at different lodges (for 1 day or 2 days as the case may be).
6. To form at least two youth groups.
7. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
8. To Create a Website of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation.

Madras Theosophical Federation

1. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
2. To organize two study camps on Theosophy at Adyar.
3. Increase the **NET** membership by 25 members.
4. To organize visits to 5 colleges by good speakers in order to attract young generation towards Theosophy.
5. To form two new Theosophical Lodge.
6. To organize one Workers' Training Camp in Adyar.
7. Dissemination of information in the print media about TS and Theosophy. (Two Special Days like Annie Besant's Birthday.)
8. To arrange visit to 10 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or

a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.

9. Guided tour to International Headquarters at Adyar for all the members of all the Affiliated Lodges, in a phased manner.

Marathi Theosophical Federation

1. To organize 5 one-day seminars on Theosophical Subjects.
2. To conduct 5 essay competitions /debate competitions/ book reviews based on Theosophical books for Higher Secondary and College level students.
3. To publish 5000 copies of leaflets on two topics of Theosophy in Marathi and distribute them to lodges, schools and general public.
4. To introduce one 3-day vacation study camp on Theosophical subject for at least 20 students of schools and colleges.
5. To increase the **NET** membership by 10 members.
6. To conduct two 1-day introductory camp or workshop for new members.
7. To establish Theosophical Study Resource Centre in Federation and to prepare at least 5 trainers (resource persons) to propagate Theosophy in the society.
8. To conduct a 3-day study camp at Bhowali in the third week of May 2020, with at least 20 members.
9. To conduct goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
10. To promote Inter-Federation Theosophical Study Meetings by organizing one-day seminar either at Belgaum or at Mumbai.
11. To arrange visit to 10 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.

Rayalaseema Theosophical Federation

1. To arrange visit to 15 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.
2. To activate 4 dormant lodges.
3. To form one study centre and 3 new lodges.
4. To increase the **NET** membership by 25 members.

5. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali during the last week of April, 2020, with participation of 30 members.
6. To visit 2 colleges/schools at least once in every two months for popularizing Theosophy.
7. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
8. To start Theosophical Libraries in 4 lodges of the federation.
9. To conduct 3 training camps in order to train members to become federation lecturers and resource persons.
10. To print and distribute 4 Theosophical books (500 copies) and 6 Theosophical pamphlets (1000 copies), each in Telugu.

Tamil Theosophical Federation

1. To organize 6 study classes in different lodges.
2. To publish 500 copies each of 10 pamphlets in Tamil on Theosophical subjects for lodges and general public.
3. To increase the **NET** membership by **10** members.
4. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.
5. To organize 10 debate/essay competitions at school and college level.
6. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali with at least 10 members.
7. To organize at least six Lectures by Tamil speakers on Theosophical subjects in six schools/colleges.
8. To arrange visit to 10 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.

Telugu Theosophical Federation

1. To increase the **NET** membership by 20 members (including women and youth).
2. To revive and activate two dormant lodges.
3. To arrange visit to 20 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.
4. To popularize Theosophical literature in 4 colleges and 1 University.

5. To conduct two study camps.	50
6. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali with about 25 members from the Federation.	
7. To conduct at least two public meetings to introduce Theosophy among the people in order to attract new members.	
8. To publish the book “ <i>Invisible Helpers</i> ” by C.W. Leadbeater in Telugu language.	
9. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.	100
10. To create a new website for Telugu Federation.	

Utkal Theosophical Federation

1. To form one new lodge and one new centre and revitalize two dormant lodges.	
2. To increase the NET membership by 15 members.	100
3. To invite four National Lecturers for conducting study camps of three days’ duration.	25
4. To impart Theosophical education once in a month in two different schools.	
5. To publish one translated Theosophical book and two reprints in Odia.	
6. To participate in the National Book Fair in Bhubaneswar for 7 days to sell books and distribute 500 Odia pamphlets on Theosophy.	100
7. In order to popularize Theosophy, three public propagation meetings will be held in school/college and in a University through lectures, books and handouts.	100
8. To arrange visit to 7 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.	
9. To conduct a 5-day study camp at Bhowali in June 2020 with 15 members.	
10. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.	70

U.P. & Uttarakhand Theosophical Federation

1. To develop a website for U.P. & Uttarakhand Federation.	100
2. To arrange visit to 15 Lodges either by the President, Secretary, or a knowledgeable member for the better functioning of Lodges.	67
3. To organize five programmes/talks on Theosophy for students/youths.	100
4. To organize ten public talks/sessions for exposing general public to Theosophical teachings.	80
5. To conduct six study camps of 2-3days’ duration.	50
6. To organize seven 1-day Study Camp/Seminar.	28
7. To organize five sessions on Guided Meditation.	40
8. To organize a 5-day study camp in Bhowali in June 2020 (Jointly with M.P./ Rajasthan Federation) with participation of 20 members.	0
9. To publish two books on Theosophy in Hindi.	100
10. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of every Lodge.	100
11. To distribute 100 books & 500 pamphlets on Theosophy among the students, youth and general public.	100
12. To increase the NET membership by 5 members.	0

THE GOLDEN STAIRS

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 behest 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 defence 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 step of which
The learner may climb
To the temple of Divine Wisdom.

H.P. BLAVATSKY