

causes of many situations and circumstances which otherwise might seem cruel and unjust.

In the last analysis, unity with others is a spontaneous response of the heart, not merely a tenet upon which we may speculate and dogmatize. When we achieve that response, we are carrying out the mandate that has been given by every great spiritual teacher. This is not an easy task, for it demands a ruthless uprooting of hidden prejudices which smother and thwart our nobler impulses. We have been given a high command that expresses a spiritual answer to the ancient question of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" We learn that humanity's oneness cannot be denied for it has its source in the One Life which sustains all there is and gives everything its being. We started our long evolutionary pilgrimage aeons ago; it is our goal to return with fully awakened consciousness of that divine life within us, which unites us to all in unity of the spirit as well as of the flesh.

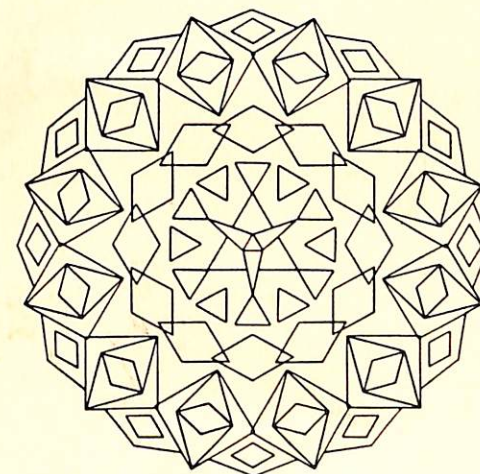
The Theosophical Society is a world organization dedicated to the promotion of harmony among all people and the encouragement of the study of religion, philosophy and science, to the end that we may better understand ourselves and our place in the universe. The Society stands for complete freedom of individual search and belief.

The Theosophical Society in New Zealand maintains a postal library at its national Headquarters (address below) with many volumes covering Theosophy, mysticism, occultism, religions of the world, philosophy and other subjects. In addition video and audio cassettes can be borrowed.

Free leaflets on Theosophy, the Theosophical Society, library catalogues and information on how to join the society will be supplied on request.

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# The Human Family



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND



## THE HUMAN FAMILY

The Theosophical Society is one of many movements seeking to promote greater unity and understanding among all people, and it has as its principal object "To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color." This object is based on what is held to be a corresponding first principle: that all life emanates from one Divine Source. To speak of "brotherhood without distinction" does not mean that people of different ethnic groups and cultures should think and feel and look alike; it does not mean uniformity. On the contrary, it is the diversity of the human family which gives it so rich a pattern of relationships. For every ethnic group and every culture has its own quality to contribute, its own note to sound, its own force to add to the whole of humanity's progress on the evolutionary path to completion of its destiny.

### THE ONE LIFE

It is obvious now, even from science, that interdependence and cooperation have their roots in nature. The relatedness of all people is not merely a nice sentiment, or even just a beautiful ideal to which it might be hoped everyone would subscribe. It is a principle found throughout all aspects of nature, an inherent law by which the world is put together. The modern idea of the universe is one of wholeness in which all the parts are interrelated in such a way that any change of one element produces change throughout the whole, much as the pattern of a kaleidoscope changes with the movement of one of its parts. In such a world, isolation and separateness are impossible; one cannot escape involvement in the whole of things. Because this essential unity transcends all differences, it is urgent that we discover the harmonious basis upon which humanity was meant to live and build.

It is postulated that the One Life, the One Reality, is behind and within all nature, giving it the impulse to grow, develop, reproduce itself—a unitary creative fountain from which the prolific variety of forms arises. It is through the evolutionary process that the One breaks forth into countless forms and substances. But it can be observed that, in this infinity of relationships, all parts tend to join together to form harmonious

wholes. For example, the atoms, the basic building blocks of the universe, are formed on this principle, as are molecules, cells, organs, organisms and societies of all kinds. Everywhere in the universe there is the joining together of unlike parts for the good of the whole. Can it be said, then, that there is really any such thing as one person against another, or human beings against animals or against nature?

### HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

The theosophical philosophy adds this deeper spiritual meaning of our relationships to the practical view of human unity; and, in the light of world events, it is being increasingly recognized that this is not only an urgent necessity but actually a condition of survival for our civilization. According to Theosophy, each of us in our true nature is a divine consciousness, a spiritual entity clothed in a physical form through which we experience the phenomenal world. From this point of view, the process of evolution relates not only to the perfecting of form, but also to the unfoldment of the individual consciousness or life within. Thus, from the theosophical point of view, the broad evolutionary trend is toward the development and growth of individual uniqueness. Through the process of rebirth, or reincarnation as it is called, each individual occupies many bodies in different cultures and environments and gradually brings into action the whole of his or her divine potentiality. Thereby we move toward that state described in the Bible as "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Since each individual is rooted in the Divine Consciousness, it follows that the Divine Life is in all beings. Each of us, as a localized point in that life, participates in this unity. Thus, unity is a principle in nature, even though we have been slow in recognizing it.

### BROADER VIEW OF EVOLUTION

This broader view of evolution—always realizing the source from which it arises—means that our fellows are all embarked on the same evolutionary journey, although we all move in our own way and according to the unfoldment of our own unique talents and capacities. And though at different levels of achievement, we are all of equal importance in the scheme of things.

As we see the great problems of human conflict in the world around us, we see the imperative need for a truer understanding of each other so as to build a

more creative relationship with our fellows and to recognize that the divine life is in all people, no matter what their race or creed or color. It is not a matter of trying to fit all into the same pattern, but of realizing that we must find a way of living and working together in harmony. We can begin this in our own small way, wherever we are situated, for we can see that we are on the journey of life together and that every good deed and noble thought and every service to others make the journey faster and easier. Unworthy acts and thoughts are our own stumbling block to progress. Such is the law. To live in a spirit of harmony with others is also to help ourselves.

### DUAL PROCESS

The theosophical view of evolution as a dual process of form and consciousness explains differences in people more reasonably and more justly than does a belief in haphazard circumstances, a throw of the dice by some irresponsible power in whose grip we are helpless. But evolution explains another fact also, and gives further impetus to our sense of responsibility. People have always recognized great spiritual leaders. When we realize that they, too, have journeyed through the same vicissitudes we are encountering, that they have earned their great spiritual unfoldment through many lives of noble effort, we look up to them with greater veneration. When we realize that humanity is a family, we can look on all with compassionate love. We are links in a vast chain stretching on the long, long road of life. The thread that unites us is Divine Love, of which each of us partakes. How, then, can we despise our brothers or sisters, however weak they may seem to be? As we see others stumbling, we should not hate them but rather extend compassion, realizing that we also are stumbling and all of us need to help each other. We are far from perfect and have before us a long evolutionary journey before we reach our goal.

### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH

Our concept of a universal nucleus of brotherhood, then, is one that enables us to look at life with a certainty that we are all destined to grow in stature. This encourages us to accept the responsibility for our own rate of growth; it also stimulates our sense of social responsibility, our compassion for anyone whose need is greater than our own and our understanding of the