

Science – Our Greatest Ally¹

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Modern science has revealed many aspects of nature which mankind has not perceived until now. In the fields of chemistry, physics and biology the laws of nature have slowly been discovered. A common feature of all the natural laws is their immutability. They are totally reliable and in this they share with the great universal law of karma which plays such an important part in theosophy. Fundamentally it is the law of cause and effect by which the whole cosmos operates throughout all its parts.

HPB writes in the Key to Theosophy:*“we consider it the Ultimate Law of the Universe, the source, origin, and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. Karma is that unerring Law which adjusts every effect to its cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being.”*

The inevitability of the law is taught in the Dhammapada: *“If man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.”*

The application of the Hermetic Axiom as above, so below; as is the Inner, so is the Outer, etc. enables us to imagine how the spiritual, esoteric world operates thereby bridging Science and Spirituality.

The scientific method is to observe nature and suggest hypotheses which explain her behaviour. So we are told that the process of checking and re-checking in order to validate the laws propounded by earlier generations of wise men has continued from time immemorial. In the last few centuries this method has had spectacular success in the field of material science; while at the same time it has provided the evidence for the esoteric science which is the basis of the Wisdom tradition and Theosophy. Recent evidence of an esoteric nature has been provided by the phenomenon of near death experiences (NDE's) which provide a consistent, repeatable pattern which is an aspect of the natural law of cause and effect. This evidence is very supportive of theosophical teaching, particularly in the Mahatma Letters, about the after death processes and reincarnation. Many modern scientists are strangely reluctant to allow the same processes of

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validation (of scientific research) to be used outside the field of natural science. However there is no logical reason why the same criteria should not be applied in the spiritual realm. Here repeatability, consistency and immutability are just as important in establishing the truth. At the end of life a person needs to be able to face death with confidence that his/her consciousness will survive, and knowing the truth is then very important to that person. The esoteric teaching on the nature of time and space in the spiritual realm also provides a foundation for truth about the survival of our higher consciousness.

As well as our ordinary everyday waking consciousness there is a spiritual consciousness which can be accessed when we raise our awareness into our higher principles. This is sometimes described as the opening of the third eye. It is here that the experiences we have with materialistic science can help us. As we learn science we are able to see more deeply into Nature, but the student has to make a long and sustained effort over many years to reach this state of high expertise. So it is with spiritual perception. There is no short-cut, sometimes a number of lifetimes of effort are required to achieve enlightenment. The old adage “practice makes perfect” is as relevant here as in all other branches of human endeavour.

It is part of this universal spiritual quest which is summed up in the third object of the Theosophical Society *“To investigate the unexplained Laws of Nature and the Powers Latent in Man.”* This is not only a corporate aim of any group of people, a society, but it also constitutes a personal individual purpose of life for everyone on the path to spiritual maturity.

“The Cycles of Matter will be succeeded by the Cycles of Spirituality and a fully developed mind. On the law of parallel history and races, the majority of the future mankind will be composed of glorious Adepts. Humanity is the child of cyclic Destiny, and not one of its Units can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its co-operative work with nature” (SDII 446, SDI 465, SDIII 446). Thus will mankind, race after race, perform its appointed cyclic - pilgrimage.

The whole purpose of life is to achieve spiritual maturity. The scientific method which has been so successful on the physical plane may well be the best method for advancing in spirituality. Many techniques have been employed by the mystics down through history and there are many paths that can be followed of which the scientific path is only one. This method however does seem to be particularly appropriate for the 21st century and the modern age of scientific progress.

“The mysteries never were, never can be put within the reach of the general public, not at least until that longed for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal. At no time have more than a scarcely appreciable minority of men possessed natures secret.....” ML2

In the Key to Theosophy, Madame Blavatsky refers to the double consciousness of the human mind. *“There is a spiritual consciousness, the Manasic mind “illuminated by the light of Buddhi, that which subjectively perceives abstractions; and the sentient consciousness (the lower manasic light), inseparable from our physical brain and senses. This latter consciousness is held in subjection by the brain and physical senses, and being in its turn equally dependent on them, must of course fade out and finally die with the disappearance of the brain and physical senses. It is only the former kind of consciousness, whose root lies in eternity, which survives and lives for ever, and may therefore be regarded as immortal. Everything else belongs to passing illusion”.*

Key to Theosophy p.179

This higher manasic mind is only activated when we cross the Antahkarana Bridge which provides the only way to enlightenment and spirituality. Antahkarana is defined more fully in the Instructions as *“that path or bridge of communication which serves as a link between the personal being whose physical brain is under the sway of the lower(animal) mind, and the reincarnating Individuality, the spiritual Ego, Manas – Manu, the 'Divine Man”.* SD Addendum To cross this bridge is one of the most difficult and yet one of the most profound events in the path of the pilgrim. It can only be achieved by constant attention to the spiritual life and practice which is offered by meditation and study. Some travellers on the road find religious practice also helpful when a religion has an accessible deeper esoteric side to it.

“There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe. I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that opens inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for ever more. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling – the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come”. CW XIII, 219