

What is Theosophy?

Theosophy presents a world view that emphasises the unity and interconnectedness of all life. It is a philosophy to be understood, not blindly accepted. Its principles have been stated by seers and sages since the most ancient times. It is not a religion, though its concepts and ideas are found in many of the ancient religions and also in most of the major world religions of today. Theosophy is religion itself, the essence of true religion. It is a synthesis of the underlying wisdom or mystic teachings of the ages and provides a framework for understanding the universe. Hence Theosophy has been called the Ancient or the Ageless Wisdom, the Wisdom-Religion or the Wisdom-Tradition, the perennial philosophy.

The Secret Doctrine

A brilliant overview of Theosophy was brought to the world with the publication in 1888 of *The Secret Doctrine* by H.P. Blavatsky (one of the co-founders of The Theosophical Society). In that source book of inner wisdom, the author quoted from ancient sages, from the Vedas, from Plato, Confucius, Guatama Buddha, Jesus and from the philosophers, scientists and other thinkers of her own day. She drew together strands from these and other sources to weave a tapestry showing the cosmos permeated with intelligence and spirit. She portrayed human beings as both earthly and divine, with vast potential still to be unfolded, through future cycles of evolution. She described our sevenfold inner nature with its capacity to develop higher and higher expressions of emotion, concrete and abstract thought, intuitive insight, compassion, realisation of unity, and spiritual will. Also super physical worlds around us, permeating the visible physical one, from which intelligences and energies play on us and on all nature. There have been many expressions of Theosophy since Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine*; few or none have been so complete or so profound an exposition of the fundamental principles of the theosophical world view.

A Vision Of Order

Theosophy satisfies our yearning for purpose, by portraying ourselves and the universe as progressively unfolding latent powers of spirit and consciousness. It satisfies our need to belong to something greater than ourselves as it points to the spark in each of us, that is always part of the Divine Life from which all arises. It explains life's seeming inequalities as consequences of karma, the law of balance and harmony, a law which gives us feedback for our actions and educates us. It expands our perspective to include a continuum of many lifetimes through which we grow towards spiritual maturity.

A Way Of Life

A way of life is implicit in Theosophy, in which we act from a realisation of our oneness with all life and strive to awaken our higher potential for intuition, understanding, insight, love, compassion and creativity. Theosophy encourages us to stretch our minds by study, to expand our hearts by understanding others, and to develop our practical skills through useful work and altruistic service. It encourages self-examination and self-awareness, so that we see how to purify and improve our character so as to overcome obstacles to the Divine Life which seeks to express itself through us. A study of Theosophy inspires us to meditate, so that we can still the mind and emotions and sense the deeper core of consciousness that is our essence, and that of all beings.

The basics of Theosophy are reasonable and easy to grasp, but there are also depths that challenge our intuition and can provide a lifetime of study for those inclined to pursue it. Anyone can begin living the theosophical life, at any time, by seeking to live in harmony with nature and with others.

But the spiritual path, toward which Theosophy points the way, reaches to heights beyond ordinary human conceptions, as it leads to the unfolding of our higher spiritual potential. Thus Theosophy offers a philosophy by which to live in the present and to grow without limits.

Some Books Recommended for Further Reading

- * The Mysteries of Existence by Jack Patterson
- * The Key to Theosophy *by* H.P. Blavatsky
- * Theosophy: What's it all about? *by* Geoffrey Farthing
- * Ancient Wisdom: Modern Insight *by* Shirley Nicholson
- * Life: Your Great Adventure *by* Eunice and Felix Layton
- * A Textbook of Theosophy *by* C. W. Leadbeater
- * Man the Measure of All Things *by* Sri Krisna Prem
- * Modern Theosophy *by* Hugh Shearman