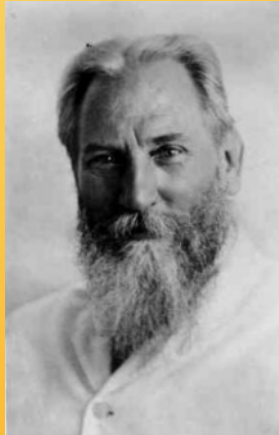


**The Masters and
The Path**
by
**The Rt. Rev. Charles
Webster Leadbeater**
(Extract)



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CHAPTER III **THE WAY TO THE MASTER** **THE MASTERS AND THE PATH**

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BROTHERHOOD OF ADEPTS, the Great White Brotherhood; there have always been Those who knew, Those who possessed this inner wisdom, and our Masters are among the present representatives of that mighty line of Seers and Sages. Part of the knowledge, which They have garnered during countless æons is available to every one on the physical plane tunder the name of Theosophy. But there is far more behind. The Master Kuthumi Himself once said smilingly, when someone spoke of the enormous change that the Theosophical knowledge had made in our lives, and of the wonderful comprehensiveness of the doctrine of reincarnation : “Yes, but we have only lifted a very small corner of the veil as yet.” When we have thoroughly assimilated the knowledge given us, and are all living up to its teaching, the Brotherhood will be ready to lift the veil further ; but only when we have complied with those conditions.

For those who wish to know more and to draw nearer, the Path is open. But the man who aspires to approach the Masters can reach Them only by making himself unselfish as They are unselfish, by learning to forget the personal self, and by devoting himself wholly to the service of humanity as They do. Their point of view is so radically different from ours that it is difficult at first for us to grasp it. They have Their private affections just as we have, and assuredly They love some men more than others; but They will never allow such feelings as those to influence Their attitude in the very slightest degree when the work is in question. They will take much trouble over a man if They see in him the seeds of

future greatness, if They think that he will prove a good investment for the amount of time and force spent upon him. There is no such possibility as the faintest thought of favouritism in the minds of these Great Ones. They consider simply and solely the work which has to be done, the work of evolution, and the value of the man in relation to it; and if we will fit ourselves to take part in that, our progress will be rapid.

Few people realize the magnitude of this undertaking, and therefore the seriousness of what they are asking when they want to be taken as pupils. The Adepts are dealing with the entire world in enormous comprehensive sweeps of power; They are influencing millions in their causal bodies or on the buddhic plane, and all the time steadily, though by almost imperceptible degrees, raising the higher bodies of the people on a wholesale scale. And yet the same blaster, who spends His life in doing that work, will sometimes turn aside and pay personal attention to little details connected with one pupil.

All who dare to ask to become pupils should try to realize the stupendous character of the forces and the work, and the magnitude of the Beings with whom they propose to come into contact. The least understanding of the greatness of all these things will make it clear why the Adepts will not spend some of Their energy on a pupil, unless They have evidence that in a reasonable time he will add to the support of the world a strong current of strength and power in the right direction. They live to do the work of the Logos of the system, and those of us who wish to draw near to Them must learn to do likewise, and live only for the work. Those who do that will certainly attract the attention of the Holy Ones, and be trained by Them to help and bless the world.

Human progress is slow, but it is constant; therefore the number of the Perfected Men is increasing, and the possibility of attaining to Their level is within the reach of all who are willing to make the stupendous effort required. In normal times we should need many births before we could gain Adeptship, but just now it is possible for us to hasten our progress on that Path, to compress into a few lives the evolution which otherwise would take many thousands of years. That is the effort which is being made by many members of the Theosophical Society ; for there is in that

Society an Inner School which teaches men how to prepare themselves more rapidly for this higher work. That preparation needs great self-control, determined effort carried on year after year, and often with but little to show outwardly in the way of definite progress; for it involves the training of the higher bodies far more than the physical body, and the training of the higher does not always manifest itself very obviously on the physical plane.

Anyone who hears about the Masters and Their teaching, if he has any grasp at all of what it means and involves, must instantly be seized with a most intense desire to understand Them and enter Their service; the more he learns the more does he become filled with the wonder and beauty and glory of God's plan, and the more anxious does he become to take part in the work. Once he has realized that God has a plan of evolution, he wants to be a fellow-labourer with God, and nothing else can possibly bring satisfaction.

Then he begins to ask himself the question : "What must I do next?" and the answer is: "Work. Do what you can to help the progress of humanity in the Master's way. Begin with what you have the opportunity to do and what you can do, which may be any little external thing at first, and presently as you acquire the necessary qualities of character you will be drawn into the higher side of it all, until, through striving to be and do your best you will find yourself possessed of the qualifications which admit to Initiation and membership in the Great White Brotherhood itself."

I remember, when first I had the privilege of coming into somewhat closer touch with the Master, I asked Him in a letter what I should do. He answered to the following effect : "You must find work for your self; you know what we are doing. Throw yourself into our work in any way you can. If I gave you a definite piece of work to do you would do it, but in that case the karma of what was done would be mine, because I told you to do it. You would have only the karma of willing obedience, which, of course is very good, but it is not the karma of initiating a fruitful line of action. I want you to initiate work for yourself, because then the karma of the good deed will come to you."

I think we might all take that unto ourselves. We might realize that it is our business not to wait until we are asked to do something, but to set to work. There is a good deal of quite humble work to be done in connection with Theosophy. Often perhaps some of us would prefer the more spectacular part; we would like to stand up and deliver lectures in public to big audiences. You can generally find people who are willing to offer themselves for that; but there is a great deal of humdrum office work to be done in connection with our Society, and we do not always find so many - volunteers for that. Reverence and love for our Masters would lead us to be willing to do anything whatever in Their service, however humble; and we may be sure that we are working in Their service when we are helping the Society which two of Them founded.

The qualifications for admission to the Great White Brotherhood, which have to be acquired in the course of the work in the earlier part of the Path, are of a very definite character, and are always essentially the same, although they have been described in many different terms during the last twenty-five centuries. But the latest and simplest account of them is to be found in Mr. J. Krishnamurti's wonderful little book, *At the Feet of the Master*.

Although Mr. Krishnamurti puts this book before the world, the words which it contains are almost entirely those of the Master Kuthumi. "These are not my words," the author says in the Foreword; "they are the words of the Master who taught me." When the book was written, Mr. Krishnamurti's body was thirteen years old, and it was necessary for the Master's plans that the knowledge requisite for Initiation should be conveyed to him as quickly as possible. The words contained in the book are those in which the Master tried to convey the whole essence of the necessary teaching in the simplest and briefest form. But for the requirements of this particular case, we might never have had a statement so concise and yet so complete, so simple and yet so all-inclusive. Many books have been written expounding the details of the stages of this preparatory Path, and there has been much argument over the exact shades of meaning of Samskrit and Pali words; but in this little manual the Master boldly brushes all that aside and gives nothing but the essence

of the teaching, expressed as far as may be in modern terms and illustrated from modern life.

For example: He translates the four qualifications Viveka, Vairagya, Shatsampatti and Mumukshutva as Discrimination, Desirelessness, Good Conduct and Love. By no possible licence can the English word love be taken as a literal translation of the Samskrit word Mumukshutva, for that unquestionably means simply the desire for liberation. The Master apparently argues thus: that the intense desire for freedom is desire for escape from all worldly limitations, so that even when among them one may be absolutely free from the slightest feeling of bondage to them. Such freedom can be attained only by union with the Supreme, with the One who is behind all, that is to say, by union with God—and God is Love. Therefore only by our becoming thoroughly permeated with the Divine Love can freedom become possible for us.

There is no more beautiful or satisfactory description of the qualifications than that given in this book, and one may say with confidence that anyone who will thoroughly carry out its teaching will certainly pass immediately through the portal of Initiation. It was a very exceptional case for the Master to spend so much of His time in the direct teaching of one individual, but through Mr. Krishnamurti it has reached tens of thousands of others, and helped them to an immeasurable extent.

The story of how this little book came to be written is comparatively simple. Every night I had to take this boy in his astral body to the house of the Master, that instruction might be given him. The Master devoted perhaps fifteen minutes each night to talking to him, but at the end of each talk he always gathered up the main points of what He had said into a single sentence, or a few sentences, thus making an easy little summary which was repeated to the boy, so that he learnt it by heart. He remembered that summary in the morning and wrote it down. The book consists of these sentences, of the epitome of the Master's teaching, made by Himself, and in His words. The boy wrote them down somewhat laboriously, because his English was not then very good. He knew all these things by heart and did not trouble particularly about the notes that he had made. A little later he went up to Benares with our President.

While there he wrote to me, I being down at Adyar, and asked me to collect and send to him all the notes that he had made of what the Master had said. I arranged his notes as well as I could, and typed them all out. Then it seemed to me that as these were mainly the Master's words I had better make sure that there was no mistake in recording them. Therefore I took the typewritten copy which I had made to the Master Kuthumi, and asked Him to be so kind as to read it over. He read it, altered a word or two here and there, added some connecting and explanatory notes, and a few other sentences which I remembered having heard Him speak.

Then He said : "Yes, that seems correct; that will do"; but He added: "Let us show it to the Lord Maitreya." And so we went together, He taking the book, and it was shown to the World-Teacher Himself, who read it and approved. It was He who said : "You should make a nice little book of this to introduce Alcyone to the world." We had not meant to introduce him to the world; we had not considered it desirable that a mass of thought should be concentrated on a boy of thirteen, who still had his education before him. But in the occult world we do what we are told, and so this book was put into the printer's hands the following morning. All the inconveniences which we expected from premature publicity came about ; but still the Lord Maitreya was right and we were wrong; for the good that has been done by that book far outweighs the trouble it brought to us. Numbers of people, literally thousands, have written to say how their whole lives have been changed by it, how everything has become different to them because they have read it. It has been translated into twenty-seven languages.

There have been some forty editions of it, or more, and over a hundred thousand copies have been printed. A wonderful work has been done by it. Above all, it bears that special imprimatur of the Coming World-Teacher, and that is the thing that makes it most valuable-the fact that it shows us, to a certain extent, what His teaching is to be. Other books also there are which the pupil will find of the utmost use to him in his endeavour to enter upon the Path; *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path* were given to us for this purpose, and our President's wonderful books, *In the Outer Court* and *The Path of Discipleship*, will be found of inestimable value.

Having these books before him the pupil is left in no doubt as to what he should do. He should obviously make efforts along two particular lines—the development of his own character, and the undertaking of definite work for others. Clearly what is set before him in this teaching implies an altogether different attitude towards life in general ; that has been expressed by one of the Masters in the phrase: “He that wishes to work with us and for us must leave his own world and come into ours.” That does not mean, as might usually be supposed by students of Oriental literature, that the pupil must abandon the ordinary world of physical life and business, and retire to the jungle, the cave or the mountain; but it does mean that he must abandon altogether the worldly attitude of mind and adopt instead of it the attitude of the Master.

The man of the world thinks of the events of life chiefly as they affect himself and his personal interests ; the Master thinks of them *only* as they affect the evolution of the world. Whatsoever on the whole tends to progress and helps humanity along its path—that is good and to be supported ; whatsoever in any way hinders these things—that is undesirable and should be opposed or set aside. That is good which helps evolution; that is evil which retards it. Here we have a criterion very different from that of the outer world; a touchstone by means of which we can quickly decide what we must support and what we must resist ; and we can apply it to qualities in our own character as well as to outer events. We shall be of use to the Master just in so far as we can work along with Him, in however humble a fashion; we

We have now entered upon a period in the world’s history in which progress at all levels of evolution can be very rapid, because the near coming of the World-Teacher has set up so strong a tide of thought and feeling about spiritual things, all in the direction of progress, that anyone who now makes an effort along that line finds himself swimming with the current and advancing swiftly. This refers not merely to the current of human thought and feeling ; in fact, human thought is but a very small part of that tide, for the human beings who know anything definite as to the nearness of the Coming are but a minority. What counts most is the tremendously powerful thought and feeling of the vast hosts of the great Angels who know of the Plan, and are trying in every way to help it.

Such rapid progress is, however, a very decided strain—a thing which few aspirants sufficiently realize. The student of occultism who sets before himself the idea of hastening his development will do well to remember that one of the necessities is good physical health. He wishes to make in one life the progress which under ordinary circumstances would be distributed over twenty or more, and as the amount that has to be done is the same in either case, for no reduction whatever has been made in the standard of the requirements for Initiation, it is obvious that he must work all his vehicles very much harder if he is to succeed.

It is possible on the physical plane to shorten the period of study usually assigned to any given examination; but a man can do it only by putting a far greater tax upon his brain, his attention, his eyesight, his power of endurance; and we all know how fatally easy it is for him to strain himself in any one of these directions, and thereby seriously to injure his physical health. Similar conditions attend upon the efforts to hasten spiritual evolution; it can be done, and it has been done, and it is a very fine thing for any man to do, always with this proviso, that he must watch very carefully against overstrain, lest in the ultimate he should delay his development instead of advancing it. It is not sufficient to have good physical health at the beginning of one's endeavour; it is also necessary to preserve it until the end, for the progress itself is but a means to an end, and we try to develop ourselves not that we may become great and wise, but that we may have the power and the knowledge to work for humanity to the best effect. We must never forget that occultism is above all the apotheosis of common-sense.

Hitherto, except very rarely, persons have been initiated only after their physical bodies have come to mature age, and after they have proved by their activities in life that their hearts are pledged to the work of the Logos. During the last few years, however, certain egos whose bodies are still young have been given the privilege of Initiation, and we understand that this has been done in order that when the Lord comes He may find a band of young workers ready to serve Him. On His arrival, the World-Teacher will wield the wondrous consciousness of the Brotherhood, and the more helpers dwelling in physical bodies that He can draw round Him at any given place, the more will His work be

facilitated. He can use the services of any ordinary man of the world to the extent of that man's capacity ; but one who is already an accepted pupil of the Master would be of far more use to Him in many directions than the man of the world could ever be; and of almost infinitely greater use still would be one who had passed the portal of Initiation and had awakened all the multiple links which bind together the members of the Brotherhood. It is always the ego who is initiated; the age of the physical body which it happens to be holding at a given time has little to do with the case.

In all cases when young people have been initiated, elder members of the Brotherhood living near to them, or in touch with them in the physical body, have undertaken to assist and guide them. This is necessary, because of the great responsibility that Initiation brings, along with its expansion of consciousness and additional faculty and power. A wrong action or a false step on the part of an Initiate involves bigger karmic consequences than a similar action on the part of one who is not a member of the Brotherhood. Therefore perhaps it will be well to include here a few directions for these younger people.

Each one should ever remember that he was initiated because, in past lives and perhaps in the present one, he has helped the world to a certain requisite degree, and it is hoped that he will continue in that path and become an ever larger channel for the Life of the Logos. It is because of the probability of his increased usefulness that he is admitted to Initiation, and at the ceremony he takes the pledge, not only as the ego but as the Monad, that he will make it his life-work to pour himself out in blessing, even as the Logos is continually streaming forth His love. He must therefore each day and hour keep this pledge in mind and subserve all things to it. His karma from the past gives him various personal characteristics and impulses; he must take heed lest these drive him to think of himself and his own well-being, rather than of the greater Self and the welfare of the world.

Before he can undertake the larger work awaiting him, the youthful Initiate has often to prepare himself by an ordinary braining in College and University. In that case he will be plunged into circumstances of

vigorous activity and many self-centred interests. Life surrounds him with many temptations, and with occasions tending to make him forget his pledge to the Brotherhood. Through them all he must have a clearly defined attitude, that he has thrown in his lot with the aims of the Brotherhood. In that life in the world on every occasion, whether of study, recreation or amusement, he must definitely hold the thought: "Is this that I am going to do likely to make me better equipped for the Master's work, or a better channel to spread love and happiness?" He must always remember that the Brotherhood has the first claim on his services, and must never put himself in any position which makes it impossible for him to fulfil that duty. It is not intended that he should live the life of a hermit; but while he lives that life in society which will give him the growth he requires, he must all the time watch to see whether it is making him more of a channel for the Logos. Henceforth for him any experience, however pleasant and harmless, which cannot make him a fuller channel of the Logos, or give an opportunity for service, is valueless to him, and is so much waste of time. He should try to take advantage of every opportunity to help that he sees, and to learn such things as will make him useful.

When the pupil takes the great step of Initiation and becomes a member of the Brotherhood, he also becomes, in a far greater and more special sense than before, the brother of every one of his fellowmen. This does not mean that he must direct their lives, and try to guide them with criticism. It is not his business in life to criticize but to encourage; but if he sees reason to make any suggestion, he must do it with the very greatest care and courtesy. The world does not see the higher members of the Brotherhood; therefore it is apt to judge that organization by the junior members who come within its purview. That is what is meant by the remark in the Charge at Initiation, that the neophyte holds the honour of the Brotherhood in his hands.

It is his duty to stream forth love and benediction, so that every place in which he happens to be is happier because of his presence. He must therefore steadily turn outwards. Henceforth it does not matter to him what judgment the world gives on his actions, but only what judgment the Brotherhood gives. Whether he is popular or unpopular with the world

matters not at all, if through all his conduct he has been loyal to the ideals placed before him. Some senior members of the Brotherhood may desire to use him at any moment, wherever he happens to be, and sometimes without his knowing it in the brain-consciousness; but he cannot be used if, at the moment when he is needed, he is found brooding over his own affairs and turned inwards, not outwards to the world. The supreme need for him is the building of character, so that, when his Master looks at him, He will find him thinking of the world's welfare, and not whether that world is giving him happiness or misery.

The Work of the Masters

A department of activity which has recently been organized on a large scale by pupils of the Masters is that of practical service on the astral plane, about which I have written in the book *Invisible Helpers*. The greatest part of that work is among the newly-dead, who often find themselves there confused, bewildered, and even suffering, especially when they have been frightened during life by the hideous stories of dreadful torture after death, which form part of the stock-in-trade of some perverted religious sects. Though it is many years ago, it is still within the life of the Theosophical Society, that the organized band of invisible helpers was founded and set to work. It was originally composed of people still living, who had decided to use their time during the sleep of the body in this definite way; but they soon drew to themselves a great many already dead, who had not thought of this work before.

Until that time new-comers to the astral world were mostly left to themselves, unless it occurred to their relations to meet them and introduce them to the new life. For example, a mother who died would still watch over her children and, if any of the children died shortly after the mother, she would give them what help and information she could; and generally the good-natured people among the dead would pass on to others what knowledge they possessed, when they saw the need of help. In older civilizations, when large families and joint families were the rule, perhaps comparatively few people found themselves without a friend in need on the other side of death. Readers of Oriental literature will remember how much is said in Hindu religious books about the

importance of family ties and duties as extending to the invisible regions beyond the veil of death. Still, the condition there was somewhat like that of a country without hospitals, or schools, or bureaux of public information, where many must suffer and, in times of special calamity and war, that was often most serious.

An excellent picture of the way in which the Adepts work for the betterment of civilization is given in our President's *London Lectures of 1907*, in which she tells us something of the steps that were taken by the Brotherhood to lift Europe out of the terrible darkness of the Middle Ages. She explains that in the thirteenth century a mighty Personage, then living in Tibet, promulgated His order to the Brotherhood that, in the third quarter of every century, an effort should be made to enlighten Europe. If one goes through history carefully, one can find that from that time onward, a new ray of light was sent forth, towards the end of each century, from the Lodge.

These have been worked out by Mr. Fritz Kunz as follows:

The latest of these efforts was the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875. After careful consideration, the Masters Morya and Kuthumi undertook the responsibility of that step, and chose that noble worker, Madame Blavatsky, to help Them on the physical plane. Most students of Theosophical literature know how she was prepared for what she had to do; how in due course the Brotherhood sent her to America to search for Colonel Olcott, the comrade who would supply what was lacking in herself—the power of organization, of speaking to men and gathering them round him and shaping them into a movement in the outer world—and how the Society was founded in New York, and later had its Headquarters removed to India.

As I write, our Society is in its fiftieth year of service to humanity, and it is impossible to estimate the vast amount of good it has done in every department of human life. Its influence cannot in the least be measured by the number of its members or branches, although that is by no means insignificant, since it extends to every civilized part of the globe. But in each field of human endeavour it has sounded its characteristic note, the

reverberations of which multiply around us in the words and work of statesmen and scientists, literary men and artists, and many others of whom great numbers perhaps have never even heard the word Theosophy. It has drawn attention to the realities of the invisible world and the power of mind. It has voiced the claims in outward life of the fact of brotherhood, seeking no uniformity in human life, but the organization for mutual support of widely different individuals, each of whom shall be strong in his special type, and all of whom shall be bound together by the indissoluble bond of respect for the man who is different from himself. It has brought together East and West as never before, and has demanded fair play in the comparison of religions, and revealed with unmistakable clearness their essential unity of teaching and their common source. And it has brought thousands to the feet of the Masters, to serve Them with all their power and with all their hearts, for the good of mankind for all time to come.

In its work for the world, the Brotherhood deals not only with the present, but looks far into the future, and prepares for the development of new races and nations in which the qualities of humanity shall be developed in harmonious sequence. As we shall see in Part IV in the chapters on the Hierarchy, the progress of mankind takes place in no haphazard manner, but the formation of the races with their special characteristics, physical, emotional and mental (serving as classes in the great world-school for the development of special qualities), is as precise and definite as the curriculum and time-table of any modern college.

The great Aryan race which, though not yet at its prime, dominates the world to-day with its supreme gift of intellect, has followed after the Atlantean race, the people of which still form the majority of mankind and occupy a great portion of the land surface of our globe.

In this connection three great pieces of work are in hand at the present time, the first of which is the preparation for the physical embodiment and activity among men of the Bodhisattva or World-Teacher, who is the same great Personage, the Christ, who occupied the body of Jesus two thousand years ago. His Coming must not be confused with the centennial events already mentioned; those belong to the First Ray, and

are in the department of occult work that deals with the guidance of races and subdivisions of races ; whereas this is an event which occurs only once in a long time, and is an activity of the Second Ray, the department of religion and education. The World-Teacher will come when He thinks well, but we are told that the Coming will be soon. The Order of the Star in the East was established thirteen years ago to prepare for that Coming by drawing together people of every sect and religion all over the world, who for various reasons believe in the near approach of the World-Teacher, and are willing to combine in a grand effort to proclaim it to the world, and prepare themselves as far as may be to be useful servants of the Lord when He comes.

Since the Lord Maitreya has chosen to announce His Coming to the world through our President, we are justified, I think, in assuming that His teaching will be somewhat along the line of the ideals which she has been promulgating with such wonderful eloquence during the last thirty-six years. Some sects claim that lie will come to judge mankind and to destroy the earth, so that there is a great element of fear and uncertainty connected with their beliefs. But all fear of God comes from a misunderstanding. The Coming of Christ is indeed connected with an end—not the end of the world, but the end of an age or dispensation.

The Greek word is *aion*, which is the same as *æon* in English; and just as Christ said two thousand years ago that the dispensation of the Jewish law had come to an end, because He had come to found a new one, that of the Gospel, so will the era of the Gospel come to an end, when He returns and founds yet another. He will give the same great teaching; the teaching *must* be the same, for there is only one Truth, though perhaps it may be put a little more clearly for as now, because we know a little more. It will be promulgated in some fresh dress, perhaps, with some beauty of expression which will be exactly suited to us in this present day, and there will be some statement of it which will appeal to a large number of people. It will certainly be the same, because it has appeared in all the existing faiths. They have differed much in their method of presenting it, but they all agree absolutely in the life which they ask their followers to live. We find considerable difference between the external teachings of Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Muhammadanism; but if we

examine the good men of any one of those religions and enquire into their daily practice, we shall find that they are all leading precisely the same life—that they all agree as to the virtues a good man must possess, and as to the evils he must avoid. They all tell us that a man, must be charitable, truthful, kindly, honourable, helpful to the poor; they all tell us that a man who is hard and grasping and cruel, who is untruthful and dishonourable, is making no progress, and has no chance of success until he changes his ways. As practical people we must recognize that the things of real importance in any religion are not the vague metaphysical speculations on matters of which no one can really know anything for certain—for these can have no influence upon our conduct; the important things are the precepts which affect our daily lives, which make us this kind of man or that kind of man in our relations with our fellow-men. Those precepts

CHAPTER XII THE CHOHANS AND THE RAYS

IN THE LAST CHAPTER I have tried to describe some of the many avenues of work of the great Masters, but there are of course many others, and some about which we know practically nothing; yet what we do know indicates that the work is vast and varied, and that the Adepts deal with it in different ways, according to Their own temperaments and preferences. There is a sevenfold division running through all things, as I must explain more fully presently, and this appears also in the Great White Brotherhood.

In the Hierarchy the Seven Rays are clearly distinguished. The First or Ruling Ray is governed by the Lord of the World ; at the head of the Second Ray stands the Lord Buddha; and under These come respectively the Manu and the Bodhisattva of the Root-Race which is predominant in the world at any given time. Parallel in rank with These is the Mahachohan, who supervises all the other Five Rays, each of which nevertheless has also its own Head. In my next chapter I will explain what I can about the loftier ranks of the Hierarchy, attempting in this to render some account of the work of the Heads of Rays Three to Seven, and of the Masters Morya and Kuthumi, who stand at Their level on the First and Second Rays.

The title Chohan is given to those Adepts who have taken the Sixth Initiation, but the same word is employed also for the Head of Rays Three to Seven, which is a very definite and exalted office in the Hierarchy. We are given to understand that the meaning of the word Chohan is simply "Lord," and that it is used both generally and specifically, in much the same way as the word "lord" is employed in England. We speak of a man as a lord because he possesses that title, but that is quite different from what we mean when we speak, for example, of the Lord Chancellor or the Lord-Lieutenant of the County. The term appears again in the name Dhyān Chohan, which occurs frequently in *The Secret Doctrine* and elsewhere, and then it refers to Beings of very high station, altogether outside the Occult Hierarchy of our planet.

It is necessary at this point, if we are to understand at all this part of the work of the Masters, to digress a little and say something of what is meant by the Seven Rays. This is a matter of considerable difficulty. Long ago we received some information, very incomplete certainly; but still very valuable, about these Rays. I remember well the occasion on which it was given to us. Mr. Cooper-Oakley and I and a Hindu brother were sitting talking on the roof at Adyar in the very early days, when there was only the one Headquarters house and twenty-nine acres of half-jungle behind it; and there came to us suddenly the Master Djwal Kul, who was at that time the chief pupil of the Master Kuthumi. He gave us a great deal of teaching in those days, and was always very kind and patient, and while He sat and talked to us that day this question of the Rays came up. Mr. Cooper-Oakley in his characteristic way said: "Oh, please, Master, will you tell us all about the Rays?"

There was a twinkle in our Teacher's eye as He said: "Well, I cannot tell you *all* about them until you have reached a very high Initiation. Will you have what I can tell you, which will be partial and inevitably misleading, or will you wait until you can be told the whole thing?" Not unnaturally we thought that half a loaf was better than no bread, so we said we would take what we could get. We noted down the very interesting information that He gave, but much of it was incomprehensible to us, as He had foretold. He said: "I cannot tell you any more than that, for I am bound by certain pledges; but if your intuition can make out more I will tell you

whether you are right.” Even that little fragmentary information was of very great value to us.

The following is the table of Rays and their characteristics He then gave to us:-

RAY CHARACTERISTIC MAGIC LAST RELIGION

I Fohat, Shechinah	Brahmanical
II Wisdom	Raja Yoga	Buddhism (Human Mind)
III Akasha	Astrology (Natural Magnetic forces) Chaldean	
IV Birth of Horus	Hatha Yoga (Physical Development)	
Egyptian	V Fire	Alchemy (Material Substances) Zoroastrian
VI Incarnation of Diety	Bhakti (Devotion) Christianity, etc. (Kabalā, etc.)	
VII	Ceremonial Magic Elemental Worship

It was explained that the religion written opposite each Ray is not to be taken as necessarily a perfect exposition of it, but is simply that which now remains on earth as a relic of the last occasion on which that Ray exercised dominant influence on the world. The Magic of the First Ray and the Characteristic of the Seventh were not given. The meaning of the Birth of Horus could not be explained, but one of the characteristics of the Fourth Ray was stated to be the use of the forces of action and interaction—the male and female forces of nature, as it were. Whenever phallicism occurs in the various religions, it is always due to a materialization and misconception of some of the secrets connected with this Ray. The true development of the Seventh Ray would be communication with and instruction from the higher Devas.

After what I have said above it should be clear that the information that has as yet reached us about the Rays is fragmentary. It is not only not a full account of the subject, but is not even a perfect outline, for we were plainly told that there were huge gaps in the description given to its,

which could not possibly be filled up till much later. So far as we know, very little has hitherto been written on this subject, and that little so guardedly expressed as not to be at all readily intelligible, and occult teachers are markedly reticent when questioned about it.[1]

[1] While this book is in the press an important work on the subject is ready, *The Seven Rays*, by Professor Ernest Wood. The material which it gives is illuminative, and is presented from quite a new angle.

The essential thing to understand is that there is a certain sevenfold division of everything that exists in the manifested world, whether of life or matter. All life which exists in our chain of worlds passes through and belongs to one or other of Seven Rays, each having seven subdivisions. In the universe there are forty-nine such Rays, making, in sets of seven, the Seven Great Cosmic Rays, flowing from or through the Seven Great Logoi. In our chain of worlds, however, and perhaps in our solar system, only one of these Great Cosmic Rays is operating, and its subdivisions are our Seven Rays. It must not of course be supposed that our solar system is the only manifestation of that particular Logos, since each of the Seven Great Logoi may have millions of systems dependent on Him. As I have explained in *The Inner Life*:

“The whole of our solar system is a manifestation of its Logos, and every particle in it is definitely part of His vehicles. All the physical matter of the solar system taken as a totality constitutes His physical body ; all the astral matter within it constitutes His astral body ; all the mental matter, His mental body, and so on. Entirely above and beyond His System He has a far wider and greater existence of His own, but that does not in the least affect the truth of the statement which we have just made.

This solar Logos contains within Himself seven planetary Logoi, who are as it were centres of force within Him, channels through which His force pours out. Yet at the same time there is a sense in which They may be said to constitute Him. The matter which we have just described as composing His vehicles also composes theirs, for there is no particle of matter anywhere in the system which is not part of one or other of them. All this is true of every plane ; but let us for a moment take the astral

plane as an example, because its matter is fluid enough to answer the purposes of our enquiry, and at the same time it is near enough to the physical to be not entirely beyond the limits of our physical comprehension.

Every particle of the astral matter of the system is part of the astral body of the solar Logos, but it is also part of the astral body of one or other of the seven planetary Logoi. Remember that this includes the astral matter of which your astral body and mine are composed.

We have no particle which is exclusively our own. In every astral body there are particles belonging to each one of the seven planetary Logoi, but the proportions vary infinitely. The bodies of those Monads which originally came forth through a planetary Logos will continue all through their evolution to have *more* of the particles of that Logos than of any other, and in this way people may be distinguished as primarily belonging to one or other of these seven great Powers.”

In Christian terms these seven great Beings are found in the vision of St. John the Evangelist, who said: “And there are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the Seven Spirits of God.” Those are the mystical Seven, the great Planetary Logoi, who are life-centres in the very Logos Himself. Those are the true Heads of our Rays—the Heads for the whole solar system, not for our world only. Out through One or Other of that mighty Seven every one of us must have come, some through One, some through Another.

They are the Seven Sublime Lords of *The Secret Doctrine*, the Primordial Seven, the Creative Powers, the Incorporeal Intelligences, the Dhyan Chohans, the Angels of the Presence. But remember that this last title is used in two quite different senses, which must not be confused. At every celebration of the Holy Eucharist of our Christian brethren, there appears an “Angel of the Presence,” who is in truth a thought-form of the Lord Christ, a vehicle of His consciousness, and so is rightly called a manifestation of His Presence; but these Seven Great Ones receive the title for a very different reason—because They stand ever in the very presence of the Logos Himself, representing there the Rays of which

They are the Heads—representing us therefore, since in every one of us is part of the Divine Life of every One of Them.

For though each of us belongs fundamentally to *one* Ray—the channel through which he, as a Monad, flowed forth from the Eternal into Time—yet has he within himself something of *all* the Rays ; there is in him no ounce of force, no grain of matter, which is not actually *part* of One or Other of these wondrous Beings; he is literally compacted of Their very substance—not of One, but of All, though always One predominates. Therefore, no slightest movement of any of these great Star Angels can occur without affecting to some extent every one of us, because we are bone of Their bone, flesh of Their flesh, Spirit of Their Spirit; and this great fact is the real basis of the often misunderstood science of astrology.

We all stand always in the presence of the Solar Logos, for in His system there is no place where He is not, and all that is is part of Him. But in a very special sense these Seven Spirits are part of Him, manifestations of Him, almost qualities of Him—centres in Him through which His Power flows out. We may see a hint of this in the names assigned to them by the Jews. The first of Them is always Michael, “your Prince,” as He is called ; and this name means “The Strength of God,” or, as it is sometimes interpreted, “He who is like God in strength”.

El, in Hebrew, means God; we find it in Beth-El, which is “The House of God”; and Elohim is the word used for “God” in the very first verse of the Bible. This El occurs, as a termination, in the name of each of the Seven Spirits. Gabriel means “The Omniscience of God,” and He is sometimes called God’s Hero. He is connected with the planet Mercury, as Michael is with Mars. Raphael signifies “The Healing Power of God,” and he is associated with the Sun, which is the great health-giver for us on the physical plane. Uriel is “The Light, or Fire, of God”; Zadkiel is “The Benevolence of God,” and is connected with the planet Jupiter. The other Archangels are usually given as Chamuel and Jophiel, but I do not at present recollect their meanings or their planets.

St. Denys speaks of those Seven Spirits as the Builders, and also calls Them the Co-operators of God. St. Augustine Says that They have

possession of the Divine Thought, or the Prototype, and St. Thomas Aquinas wrote that God is the Primary, and these Angels are the Secondary, Cause of all visible effects.

Everything is done by the Logos, but through the mediation of these Planetary Spirits. Science will tell you that the planets are fortuitous aggregations of matter, condensations from the mass of the nebula, and so no doubt they are; but why at those particular points? Because behind each there is a Living Intelligence to choose the points, so that they will balance one another. Truly whatsoever exists is the outcome of natural forces working under Cosmic laws; but do not forget that behind every force is always its administrator,

THE WISDOM IN THE TRIANGLES

Many thousands of years ago there arose the need for one of the Adepts to become the World-Teacher of the Fourth Root-Race ; for the time had come when humanity should be able to supply its own Buddhas. Up to the middle of the fourth Round of the fourth incarnation of our Chain, which was exactly the central point of the scheme of evolution to which we belong, the great Officers who were required—the Manus and the World-Teachers and others—were supplied to our humanity by more advanced humanities of other Chains, which had made more progress, or perhaps were older, than we; and we ourselves, having been thus assisted, shall in our turn have later on the privilege to make provision for other and more backward schemes of evolution.

In such ways the real brotherhood of all that lives is demonstrated ; and we see that it is not merely a brotherhood of humanity, or even of the life in this Chain of worlds, but that all the Chains in the solar system mutually interact and help one another. I have no direct evidence that solar systems give assistance to each other in such ways, but I should imagine it, by analogy, to be almost certain that even that is done. At least I have myself seen Visitors from other systems, as I have said before, and have noticed that They are not merely travelling for pleasure, but are certainly in our system for some good purpose. What Their purpose is, I do not know; but of course it is not my business.

Now at this time in the remote past to which we have referred, humanity should have begun to provide its own Teachers ; but we are told that no one had quite reached the level required for the incurring of so tremendous a responsibility. The first-fruits of Humanity at this period were two Brothers who stood equal in occult development; One being He whom we now call the Lord Guatama Buddha, and the Other our present World-Teacher, the Lord Maitreya.

In what way They fell short of the required qualifications we do not know; but, out of His great love for humanity, the Lord Gautama instantly offered to make Himself ready to undertake whatever additional effort might be necessary to attain the required development. We learn from traditions that life after life He practised special virtues, each life showing out some great quality achieved.



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