



# The Rainbow Journal No. 70 March 2014

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the March issue of the Rainbow Journal. In this issue we have included four articles related to knowledge, truth and perception. It is our beliefs, usually based on how we perceive others and the world around us, that determine our attitudes, our motives

behind our actions and how we see and relate to others. Ultimately it is our beliefs that determine how happy we are. As mentioned many times before any comments and feedback are welcome. BDA. ΩΩΩ

### BELIEVING vs KNOWING

Is there any difference between believing and knowing? Over the centuries philosophers have pondered over this very question with men like Plato having arguments and discourses on the subject. They came up with hazy statements such as 'knowledge is justified true belief.' However, to us, if we consider something as true then we believe it whether or not others think our belief is justified. Conversely, if we do not hold that something is true we will not believe it even if others claim there is justification for believing it.

Knowing in a general sense can be defined as 'believing that certain facts are true.' We gather these facts from the time we are born through our interaction with our environment and through our experiences in life. We also gather many beliefs from those we look to as authoritative, e.g. parents, teachers, religious leaders, 'experts', celebrities, and from books. Unless we are scientists or the facts are important to us we do not generally attempt to substantiate this information we have gathered. The accumulation of these beliefs and facts are collectively called 'knowledge.'

From the spiritual standpoint knowing has a different meaning which is that knowing comes from within while believing comes from without. This can be a little confusing as while knowledge may be considered as the accumulation of facts gathered from sources outside of us, and we may believe this knowledge, we do not *know* that the knowledge is

true. To act on our beliefs would require faith. For example, we may believe that flying in an airplane is safe but we do not *know* for sure that the flight we are on will not crash. We require faith in the safety on the aircraft and the abilities of the pilots for us to board the plane. Similarly, if we are sick we do not *know* that the medicine prescribed to us, or the operation we undergo will make us better but we put our faith in the medicines and doctors that treat us.

This is the same with our religious beliefs. We are taught about the life and works of Jesus (or other spiritual leaders or prophets depending on our particular religion). We are taught about how we should conduct our lives, how we should treat our neighbours and what happens to us when we die but for most of us at least, we do not *know* that these things are true. We are instructed to have faith in the beliefs. In the absence of certainty in the truth of our beliefs, this faith is necessary for us to act on our beliefs.

There are however those amongst us who *know* the truth. A classic example in history of one who knew the truth was Paul of Taurus. Paul was a Pharisee and a Roman citizen. For much of his life not only did he not believe that Jesus was from God but for a time he tried to wipe out the new Christian sect by rounding up and persecuting the followers of Jesus. That is until one day when he had a spiritual experience on the road to Damascus. That experience caused a total transformation in his philosophy

and lifestyle. Following his experience he *knew* who Jesus was, referring to him as the "Son of God." In an instant Paul had knowledge of spiritual matters far beyond that of all the other converts of the time. Where did he get this knowledge? It certainly was not from the mouth of Jesus (although he did see the risen Christ in his vision) nor was it from his upbringing or from the teachings of others. This knowledge came with the awakening of the divine nature within. It was from within himself.

Many people throughout history have experienced this awakening or 'enlightenment' as Buddhists call it. These were deeply spiritual people who at some point in their lives had an overwhelming religious experience similar to that of Paul of Tarsus. However in recent times there are increasing numbers of people with no religious background or inclination who have had what is called 'near death experiences' (NDE) that affected them deeply and changed their lives. These NDEs are events whereby people, through illness, accident, or other causes have for a time become clinically dead and through the miracle of modern medical science have been resuscitated. During the brief period when they were 'dead' they went through these life changing experiences.

There are literally thousands, of recorded cases of these NDEs. The experiences these people underwent varied considerably but the outcomes were always very similar. They had completely changed their outlook on life and had a strong desire to help fellow human beings. The following are just two of the many recorded cases:

"Before his near-death experience, Rev Howard Storm, a Professor of Art at Northern Kentucky University, was not a very pleasant man. He was an avowed atheist and was hostile to every form of religion and those who practiced it. He

often would use rage to control everyone around him and he didn't find joy in anything. Anything that wasn't seen, touched, or felt, he had no faith in. He knew with certainty that the material world was the full extent of everything that was. He considered all belief systems associated with religion to be fantasies for people to deceive themselves with. Beyond what science said, there was nothing else.

"At the age of 38, Howard Storm, following a perforation of the stomach, his heart stopped beating and he experienced something he would never forget. His life was so immensely changed after his near-death experience that he resigned as a professor and devoted his time to attending the United Theological Seminary to become a United Church of Christ minister and an author<sup>1</sup>."

The second is of Daniel Rosenblit as told in his words:

"In my younger days, before I died and was blessed by God with another chance to live again, I used to ridicule people who were zealous in religions that were foreign to my own, Jewish, religion; and it's not like I was a religious person at that time either! In essence, I believed that nearly all religious people were weak-minded and that religion was their crutch. Yet, this was just a part of the great deception I was living under at the time!

"But all that changed in 1978 when, after weeks of failing health, I died and was forced to face the music. While physically dead, I was shown true reality for the first time. It was a reality from God's perspective. During that reality, I was blessed with a priceless grace. I was tutored by God Himself and what He taught me was the 'Spirit of the Law.' As the Bible states, 'The letter kills, but the spirit gives life!' I returned from bodily death and from my private tutoring

<sup>1</sup> *Descent into Death* by Rev. Howard Storm

session with God and was given a calling. My calling is this: Foremost, I am to practice the holy way taught by the Lord. Only as I was in the process of practicing this holy way, was I allowed by God to share what constitutes true religion to my neighbour! It is hypocrisy if one doesn't practice what they preach. Such hypocrisy is as a vile stench before our righteous Creator. Today more than ever, Bible-believing Christians need to learn how to follow the 'Spirit of the Law' rather than just being disciples of the 'Letter of the Law' as most unknowingly are!

“Please consider this: The bottom line is that even if there was no heaven or hell, I'd still want to walk the spiritual path. Why? Because I say to you that there is nothing preferable to do in life than becoming the best person than you can become! Nothing!! This is what it means to become like Jesus.”

All these people - Paul of Taurus, those through meditation experiencing enlightenment and those who experienced NDEs - had changed lives following their brief experiences after which they *knew* the truth. It was not simply a matter of believing they had experienced something but a firm self-justified knowledge of what was the truth.

Few of us are likely to experience a NDE or that single flash of enlightenment, however there is hope for us because all the prophets sent to us, all the religions that appeared were meant for us, those who have not yet experienced that divine awakening within. And throughout our journey we are to have faith in the fact that the Christ is with us all the way.

Edgar Cayce, through his readings,

did not directly address the issue of believing as against knowing but the wording of some of the readings is suggestive of the fact that he considered knowing as coming from within ones heart and he obviously considered there was a difference between believing and knowing as he often put the two words together.

#### FROM THE EDGAR CAYCE READINGS

*Read, too, that as He has given in His promises, that "If you ask in my name, **believing** in your heart, this shall be done in your experience," **knowing** that in patience you wait on the Lord that He may make you aware of that as He would guide and direct you in the ways you should go. And many will call you blessed.*

439-2

*As to how to make the material success, first make it mentally. For if there are not the visions of the help that you give, and **knowing** and **believing** in what you are doing, then you have chosen the wrong field. 1537-1*

*The purpose of the entity in the earth, is that it may know itself, also to be itself, and yet at one with the Creative Forces, fulfilling those purposes for which the entity comes into the earth; accepting, **believing, knowing** then thy relationship to that Creative Force.*

3508-01

*(Q) What is the cause of my fear and how may I overcome it?*

*(A) By seeing the ridiculous and yet the funny side of every experience.*

***Knowing** and **believing** in whom you have trusted, in the Lord; for without that consciousness of the indwelling, little may ever be accomplished. 5302-1*

BDA. ΩΩΩ



## PERCEPTION AND BELIEFS

There is a popular saying that "seeing is believing," but recent research suggests that the opposite may be true in that "believing is seeing." Our beliefs have a crucial effect on what our minds see. Our eyes are like video cameras which take a continuous stream of images and it is our minds that interpret these images together with related sounds, smells and even taste to form a scenario of what we consider as reality.

Our brains have the ability to filter the never ending flow of information we are receiving through our senses, for without this filter our minds would be overwhelmed by too much information. We know that this filtering takes place because, for example, if we think of something important to us while watching TV, for a while, the images from the TV may disappear from our consciousness. If there is a constant noise in the background after a while we may no longer hear it as other sensory information gets our attention.

There was a video of a trial conducted by the University of Utah in 2011 in which unsuspecting viewers were invited to count how many times certain basketball players in a group pass the ball to each other. Halfway through the trial a person in a gorilla suit walked through the middle of the players. Incredibly, scientists discovered that of the people who watched the video who were able to count how many times the basketball was passed, as much as 40 per cent failed to see the person in the gorilla suit. One can understand from this experiment why 'eye' witnesses in criminal trials can be unreliable. What they 'see' or failed to see has caused many instances of wrong verdicts in these trials.

What we perceive as reality (what is taking place) are often illusions because they are distortions of the messages we are receiving via our senses.

There are various reasons for these distortions, a major one being our beliefs. What we believe tends to influence our perception of the world. The more conviction we have over these beliefs the less likely we are to recognise anything that does not conform to these beliefs.

We all perceive reality different, according to our unique perception of that reality, from our personal position of awareness. It may be surprising for some of us to find out that our assumptions and prejudices guide our perceptions, interpretations, and recall far more than may be envisioned.

Our memory system is a web of associations and priming is the awakening or activating of certain associations. Priming experiments have been showed to reveal how one thought, even if we are not consciously aware, can influence another thought or action. Often our thinking and acting are primed by events that we are not even aware of. for example after watching a scary movie, a person will have a heightened sense of every little sound that he or she hears, with the impulse that it may be of some dangerous origin.

Understanding priming is important because much of our social information processing is automatic, unintentional, out of sight, and without awareness.

Although us humans have a remarkable tendency to being fairly accurate in our perceptions and interpretations of events and external stimuli (perhaps thanks to intuition or extra sensory perception), we also have a tendency to perceive events and interpret them according to satisfy our prejudgements and predispositions with which we live comfortably believing in. This could also be attributed to the ego, the false Self of the individual, trying to dominate and survive. An example of this

in action would be when a sports fan perceives a referee as being partial to the opposing team. The assumptions we manifest concerning reality and the world around us can even make contradictory evidence seem supportive. This can be specified as the factor in the cause of so much conflict in the areas of religion, politics, and science.

Researchers has shown that it is quite difficult to do away with a falsehood once an individual comes up with a rationale for it. An example of this would be when the first copies of bibles created by the newly-invented Gutenberg printing press went on sale, his partner that brought the bibles to a certain town was accused of being a witch, because only by black magic would it have been possible to so perfectly reproduce copies such as the ones he had, and that the printing press must be an instrument of the devil. Individuals will retain their invented explanations for their beliefs because of their ego not willing to surrender to the possibility that they are wrong and would have to shift their paradigm.

Even after being thoroughly discredited, a firmly-instilled belief will be very difficult to change. Studies have shown that it is easier to formulate a belief than change a belief already formulated. This can explain why there are so many peculiar beliefs surrounding a myriad of things still today. The more we examine our theories and explain how they might be true, the more closed we become to information that challenges our beliefs. This is important to remember, so that we keep an open mind all the time and welcome different positions of awareness concerning a particular subject rather than keeping rigidly to one particular perception of an issue.

Another demonstration of perception affecting belief is the tendency for confirmation bias, in which

we search for information that confirms our preconceptions. Individuals tend to avoid seeking information that might disprove what they believe. This may be a product of some sort of unconscious fear of “what if” scenarios, where we think “what if what I believed all these years turns out to be untrue, was I living with a lie and wasting my life away?” or some similar fear-based thoughts. When Copernicus proved that the earth was not the center of the universe and that it revolved around the sun, there was fierce opposition among many who believed in earth being the most important creation in the universe, by using the Judeo-Christian bible as the evidence to back up their confirmation bias. We are eager to verify our beliefs but not seek evidence that might disprove them, as a result. A way to overcome the confirmation bias that we have is to be wary of dogmatic statements that someone claims as being absolute truth.

In a quantum reality, there is no such thing as absolute certainty. We can not even prove for a fact that we exist and are not just some program in holographic sand box, to give an extreme look at this issue. Even when people are absolutely sure that they are right, they may be wrong. Another great way to overcome confirmation bias is to think of one good reason why a judgment you make might be wrong. This will make you consider dis-confirming information and look from the “other side of the issue” from a different position of awareness. Just remember that these are not ways in which we should undermine peoples’ reasonable self-confidence or to destroy their decisiveness. Overconfidence may bring about negative consequences, but realistic self-confidence is very adaptive and helpful.

We, as humans, make mis-attributions from time to time, which may differ from what the reality of the issue is. We mistakenly attribute a

behaviour to the wrong source at times. An example of this would be when worker productivity declines, managers will attribute this to workers being lazy. The way we make attributions gives insight into our psyche. In the example given earlier, the managers who see the workers as being lazy would seem to have a negative view on reality and see the glass as being half empty. On the other hand, if the managers saw the glass half full, they would think of other plausible reasons why worker productivity declined, such as the workplace being inefficient, unjust wages lowering worker

morale, and so on. Taking a double take before we make an attribution will provide us with coming up with a well thought out conclusion concerning a particular situation or issue so that we do not make a false attribution.

Our perception of reality will have a direct impact on our beliefs. What we should remind ourselves is how this occurs and what the remedies for carrying false perceptions may be. The outcomes make it worth while; varying from more tolerance and understanding, to empathy, reason, and shifts in consciousness. *BDA ΩΩΩ*

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## COLD AND LONELY TRUTH

What exactly is truth? This question has been posed in many different ways by very different people throughout the ages. What's clear is that, in the eyes of the masses today, truth has been redefined and blurred, and those who can see it clearly have chosen to avoid it or refuse it. Today, truth is maligned and under attack. It is no longer obvious, free, revered, concrete and specific. And, worst of all, we have learned to despise it.

Human progress has led us to this place of inherently unrealistic ideas, and we've become satisfied with misconceptions and logical fallacies. With ideas and actions, we boast of our redefining of absolutes. We've become bold at converting truth to a relative, subjective notion. But is truth really relative? Is it soft and moldable to the notions of individuals? Is it logical? These are the questions that have defined our age, but has our age validated the questions?

At the outset, it is imperative to keep in mind that by reducing truth to a relative thing, we are undermining the existence of absolute truth. This idea, however, presents many logical problems when we fully understand its implications. First, the idea, by its own

logic, cannot be true. If one were to claim that there are no absolute truths, one would be denying the only idea that could make the statement true. If there are no absolute truths, then the statement that there are no absolute truths cannot possibly be true. It would simply be nothing more than opinion or preference, and proclaiming it is akin to breaking the silence during a movie in a crowded theater by shouting something of no consequence of reason, such as, "I love the colour blue!" – utterly pointless and intrusive.

The contradictory nature of the idea of relative truth implodes. How would you feel if a man walked up to you on the street and told you that he did not know how to speak. The act of speaking immediately contradicts the statement itself.

By virtue of logic, absolute truth must exist. Otherwise, nothing could be trusted, and especially not a statement that denied its very existence. And we would not even be able to trust the reality of our own existence. The truth is true even if everyone in the world rejects it and what is false is false even if everyone in the world affirms it to be true. Truth exists independently, and outside of humanity. Truth would exist without any

life to detect it or comprehend it. Do the universe and the natural world not function on the basis of truth? Are the fixed laws of nature not the undeniable proclamation of reality?

The last hundred years have given rise to many wonderful realizations, but they have also seen us lend credence to some of the most insane notions that humans have the potential to imagine. We have stretched the bounds of reason so much that it has become possible to take any "crazy" notion and make a case for it in the upper echelons of academia.

As Malcolm Muggeridge recognized, "...it has become abundantly clear in the second half of the twentieth century that Western Man has decided to abolish himself. Having wearied of the struggle to be himself, he has created his own boredom out of his own affluence, his own impotence out of his own erotomania, his own vulnerability out of his own strength; himself blowing the trumpet that brings the walls of his own city tumbling down, and, in a process of auto-genocide, convincing himself that he is too numerous, and labouring accordingly with pill and scalpel and syringe to make himself fewer in order to be an easier prey for his enemies; until at last, having educated himself into imbecility, and polluted and drugged himself into stupefaction, he keels over a weary, battered old brontosaurus and becomes extinct."

Man, Muggeridge claims, has "educated himself into imbecility!" We have forgotten the virtues; we have rejected the truth. We no longer believe that truth is knowable, and it has become

politically incorrect to say that it is. But hidden in the crevices of our hearts we can find the truth that has eluded our comprehension and grasp.

We find truth neatly tucked under the wrinkles of foggy nuances and bonds of emotional ties. Nevertheless, perception slowly slithers in to replace the objective truth. Now, perceptions differ depending on the minds that generate them, but truth is true independent of any human intrusion. Truth must be sought after in order to understand the reality of our world and further clarify the purpose of our own existence. Once discovered, it must be embraced. We must never allow matters of emotion or will to taint it. Instead we must change our understanding of the world based on our discovery of objective truth.

Truth is not relative to the experiences of any one person. It is not owned by anyone; it is discovered within us. There is no such thing as "my truth" or "your truth." Truth cannot be owned. It simply is. While perspective renders what is thought to be the truth within each person, truth has been there all along, whether it is truly understood or not.

One cannot refute the unhealthiness of smoking by saying that in his own truth smoking is not unhealthy. This is a perspective that may or may not be based on reality. In essence, we sometimes replace truth with our own therapy for the mind. When the truth becomes too much to bear, we sneak in lies from within our feelings to replace it. But we're simply fooling ourselves.

This becomes even more obvious when we consider a directly shared reality with other people. Consider the scenario of a driver and a passenger as they witness the same objective reality. What if the driver decided to accelerate to 100 mph, endangering both of their

lives? Would the passenger be living a relatively different reality? Is the driver's truth the same as the passenger's truth? Wouldn't a normal passenger complain to the driver? If the passenger complains to the driver, may the driver answer him by telling him, "Well, you have your relative truth and I have mine"? That would be absurd. Reality is shared, and the fact that the car was speeding at 100 mph is absolutely true. Any denial of this is an attempt to escape the intrusion of reality.

If there is no objective absolute truth, then what is lying, and why then do we condemn people for it? The fact is that our lives are full of absolutes. We

live by them every day. Yet we seem to find comfort in blurring the line between truth and opinion, desperately trying to allow ourselves the personal freedoms that we want to exercise. We want to do what we want to do, and no one and nothing is going to stand in our way, not even truth. So we marginalize truth. We reduce it to merely preference and we agree to cater to our own egos rather than conform to it. Instead, we make it conform to us. But this is irrational, as truth is the very essence and manifestation of reality itself... - From *Cold and Lonely Truth* by Arthur Khachatryan. ΩΩΩ

## THE TRUE BELIEVER

If you have ever know someone who has joined a cult, become a religious convert, or threw themselves into a political movement and in the process seems to lose their identity – the book *The True Believer; Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* by Eric Hoffer may give you an insight on how that may happen. It is a compelling foray into mass movements and their power to shape minds, showing us how spiritual hunger leads people to jettison their old selves of order to become part of something apparently greater and more glorious.

Why are mass movements so powerful? Because they are full of fervour, Hoffer suggested. Powerful religious movements always have a religious fervour to them. The French Revolution was really a new religion, replacing all the dogma and rituals of the Church with similar ones devoted to the State. The same goes for the Bolshevik and Nazi revolutions. "The hammer and the sickle and the swastika," Hoffer observed, "are in a class with the cross."

Those who make up the ranks of the early stages of a revolutionary movement are looking for some big and

total change in their life. Leaders of mass movements know this, and therefore do all they can to "kindle and flame an extravagant hope." They do not promise gradual, incremental change but a total change in the believer's existence.

People normally join organisations for reasons of self-interest – to advance or benefit themselves in some way. Those who join a mass revolutionary movement, in contrast, do so "to be rid of an unwanted self." If we are not happy with who we are, in a mass movement this no longer matters, as the self is irrelevant in relation to the larger "holy cause" of the movement. Where before people experienced only frustration and meaningless in their individual existence, now they have pride, purpose, confidence, and hope. "Faith in a holy cause is to a considerable extent a substitute for the lost faith in themselves," Hoffer wrote. Yet this desire to lose a sense of individuality brings enormous self-esteem and feelings of worthiness.

Who else is vulnerable to joining a mass movement? In his chapter on potential converts, Hoffer noted that the very poor are not good candidates. They

are satisfied in just surviving rather than to be interested in some grand vision. It is those who have a bit more, who have had their eyes opened to greater things, who are more likely to get swept up. Hoffer observed: "Our frustration is greater when we have much and want more than when we have nothing and want some. We are less satisfied when we lack many things than when we seem to lack but one thing."

People join mass movements for a sense of belonging and camaraderie, a feeling so often lacking in an economically free and competitive society. They may simply be very bored. Hitler, Hoffer noted, was financed by the wives of some of Germany's great industrialists, whose regular amusements and enthusiasms no longer satisfied. The opportunity to get whipped up in a cause and its great leader is intoxicating, supplanting even reliable distractions such as family and work. Indeed, Hoffer remarked on the curious fact that it is often people with *unlimited* opportunities who are attracted to mass movements.

Finally, a movement will attract those who dislike having to be responsible for their lives. Young Nazis wished to free themselves from the burden of making decisions and slowly constructing an adult existence as their parents had done. Much more alluring were the simple promises of glory in the Third Reich. They were shocked when as loses of the war they were expected to feel responsibility for what had happened, because in their minds it was precisely responsibility that they had given up amid the pageantry of the new regime.

A mass movements' promise of a dramatically new world enables it to disregard normal moral inhibitions. The holy or glorious end justifies any means, and believers will do horrible things to other humans in the cause of creating

their paradise. Hoffer warned us to be very careful "when hopes and dreams are loose in the streets," They usually precede some kind of disaster.

To the non-believer, the self-sacrifice of a martyr, a kamikaze pilot, or a suicide bomber seems totally irrational. However, if our present life is considered worthless, and our belief in the movement is so great, it will not be such a leap to die for it. Before people reach this watershed, Hoffer said, they will have stripped themselves of a sense of their own individuality. Absorbed fully into the collective body, they are no longer the person friends and family once knew, but only a representative of a people, a party, a tribe, (In a sense they have lost their soul).

To the true believer non-believers are weak, corrupt, without backbone, or decadent. The perception of their own purity of intent allows them to do anything in the name of that noble intention - including the taking of their own lives. It is this closed-mindedness, blindness even, of the true believer that provides their power. If the world is black and white then action is clear. It is only the open-minded who have to deal with surprises and contradictions.

One of Hoffer's insights was that "what is not" is always a more powerful motivating force than "what is." While to improve their lot the average person will work on what they already have, the true believer is not satisfied they are in the process of building a whole new world. Such a hatred of the present has done terrible damage, but on the other hand the overthrow of many kinds of tyrannies would not have been possible without those who dreamed and schemed for something better, who were willing to spark a bloody revolution in the cause of ideals such as liberty and equality. For better or worse, fanatics have helped to shape our world. - *The True Believer* by Eric Hoffer. ΩΩΩ

## THE SHARED GIFT OF EDGAR CAYCE

### **Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910)**

Andrew Jackson Davis is often referred to as the "John the Baptist" of modern Spiritualism, for he preached the advent of spirit communication in the United States with an evangelical fervour. Davis grew up in extreme poverty in Blooming Grove, New York, a small hamlet along the Hudson River, the only son in a family of six. His mother was illiterate, but highly religious, and quite likely encouraged her frail, nervous son to receive visions and to hear voices early in life. Davis's father was afflicted with alcoholism and barely managed to provide any sustenance for his family in his trade as a weaver and shoemaker. Only one of the family's five daughters survived to adulthood.

When he was 12, Davis's clairvoyant impressions and spirit voices manifested convincingly enough to persuade his father to move the family to Poughkeepsie. Five years later, in 1843, Davis attended a demonstration on mesmerism conducted by Dr. J. Stanley Grimes. Mesmerism, usually defined as an old-fashioned term for hypnotism, developed out of the theories of certain physicians in the sixteenth century that humans could project and control their animal magnetism, sometimes inducing trance states in themselves or in others. In the 1760s, Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) began healing patients with what he believed was the result of animal magnetism's effect on a kind of "universal fluid" that flowed between the stars, the human body, and everything on the planet, but which today would likely be attributed to light trance states and the power of suggestion.

With Davis's childhood experiences of hearing spirit voices, it is not surprising that he was found to be a good subject by a local tailor named William Levingston, who had decided to experiment with mesmerism on his own.

Once Davis had entered an altered state of consciousness, he seemed to have the ability to see through the human body and to diagnose the cause of illnesses and medical disorders. Within a short period of time, Andrew Jackson Davis was being proclaimed as the "Poughkeepsie Seer." Men and women were coming from miles around to draw from his magnetic powers, and Levingston abandoned his tailor shop to devote all of his time to overseeing Davis's healing ministry.

On the evening of March 6, 1844, Davis experienced a life-altering event that would direct the course of his personal destiny. All he claimed to remember was being overcome by some power that made him feel as though he were literally flying through the air. When he regained consciousness the next morning, he found himself in the Catskill Mountains, 40 miles away from Poughkeepsie. Had the spirits transported him through the air and deposited him there in the mountains? Or had he walked 40 miles in one evening while in a trance? And why did he suddenly awaken to find himself in this particular spot?

While Davis claimed never to learn the answer as to how he got to that particular setting in the Catskills, he soon learned the reason why. He said that first the spirit of the Greek philosopher Galen (129 C.E.–c. 199 C.E.) materialized before him, then the spirit of the Swedish seer Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), both of whom provided him with mental illumination and spiritual revelation. From that day onward, Andrew Jackson Davis set forth on an extensive lecture schedule, proclaiming the advent of spirit communication for humans everywhere. He claimed a great cosmic doorway was being opened, and ministers from the spirit world would soon be making themselves available for contact with

those individuals who wished to gain from their wisdom and inspiration.

While on tour, Davis met Dr. S. Silas Lyons, an experienced mesmerist, who was able to induce a deep trance state in the Poughkeepsie seer. In November of 1845, with Lyons as the mesmerist, Davis as the prophetic voice, and Reverend William Fishbough as the stenographer, dictation was begun on *The Principles of Nature: Her Divine Revelations and a Voice to Mankind*. The process lasted for 15 months, and often small crowds of enthusiastic men and women, including such luminaries as American writer Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), bore witness to the words as they poured forth from the entranced Davis.

In 1847, the book was published and was received eagerly by a public seeking new revelations from a modern prophet. Although some critics pointed out many similarities to the writings of Swedenborg concerning creation, philosophy, and religion, Davis' champions replied that the seer was a man of modest education who had never read the works of the great Swedish mystic. Davis had, in fact, only five months of formal schooling. However, there should be little mystery if the *Principles of Nature* contained echoes of Swedenborg, for it was his spirit who had manifested with Galen to inspire Davis. Due to the success of his book, Davis began issuing *Univercoelum*, a periodical which was published from 1847 to 1849 and was devoted to clairvoyance, trance phenomena, and his Harmonial Philosophy.

On March 31, 1848, it is said that Davis predicted the coming of modern spiritualism when he reported that he had awakened that morning hearing a voice telling him that the good work had begun: "About daylight this morning a warm breathing passed over my face, and I heard a voice, tender and strong, saying, 'Brother, the good work has

begun. Behold, a living demonstration is born.' I was left wondering what could be meant by such a message." Although Davis and his followers would not ally themselves with the Spiritualist cause until 1850, it would often be pointed out that the Fox sisters first challenged "old Splitfoot" on March 31, 1848, and that the "voice, tender and strong," had obviously been referring to their "living demonstration" of spirit communication.

In July 1848, after creating a bit of scandal for the conservative times, Andrew Jackson Davis married Catherine Dodge, a wealthy heiress, who was 20 years his senior. Their union was unhappy and brief, and she died in 1853, leaving her estate to Davis. Davis continued to lecture and teach his Harmonial Philosophy for many years. At the age of 60, he acquired a medical degree, but soon thereafter he retired to Boston, where he ran a bookshop and prescribed herbal remedies to his patients. Andrew Jackson Davis died amidst his books and herbs in 1910, a quiet ending to the full life of the "John the Baptist" of the Spiritualist movement.

There are striking parallels between the Cayce and Davis:

- ▲ Both, as adolescents, had mystical experiences that changed their lives.
- ▲ Both discovered their psychic abilities as a result of being hypnotized, and later found the trance state could be self-induced.
- ▲ Each was fortunate in having a mother with psychic leanings who was thus able to understand when her son began to have paranormal experiences.
- ▲ They devoted their lives to helping people, diagnosing their ailments and prescribing treatments, some quite unorthodox.
- ▲ Both gave psychic commentaries on the nature and meaning of existence, but only Cayce employed

the concept of reincarnation on Earth. Davis described the soul's

journey through a succession of spiritual spheres. ΩΩΩ

## FROM HERE AND THERE

### HAPPINESS

Do what you can to increase happiness upon this earth. Know that the greatest you can do for another is not to speak a word of wisdom, but to produce a smile upon the face of that one. There is such a need for happiness and laughter on your plane in this day. And to bring laughter, to bring joy, to bring happiness on this earth would raise its vibrations. Know that an expression of joy is an expression of God. - *Paul Solomon*

### HUMILITY

The truly humble have no goal but God because they need no idols, and defense no longer serves a purpose. Enemies are useless now, because humility does not oppose. It does not hide in shame because it is content with what it is, knowing creation is the Will of God. Its selflessness is Self, and this it sees in every meeting, where it gladly joins with every Son of God, whose purity it recognizes that it shares with him. - *ACIM - The Song of Prayer*

### TRUTH

The difference between knowledge (truth) which is knowing and belief is that one has no need to defend what is true and known while those who belief will attempt to defend their beliefs.

Knowledge and truth need no defence.

### ONENESS AND LOVE

Animals show love for their offspring because they regard them as part of themselves. No one will dismiss something that they feel is part of themselves.

### RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS

Most of us consider that we have certain basic human rights. We are entitled to certain things. We may say that these rights are protected by various laws in the country in which we live and by international agreements such as the Universal Declarations of Human Rights as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. However imagine that you were stranded alone on a desert island. What rights and entitlements would you have? The answer is that you would have none. We can therefore understand that what we consider as rights and entitlements are only things that are given by other people. We have no natural claim to them. It is only through mutual agreements and respect that we can bestow rights on one another. Furthermore any 'special' rights people may claim are based on the assumption of inequality. ΩΩΩ

## CHRIST IN YOU

### Part 1 Twelfth Lesson

#### “He That Hath Seen Me Has Seen the Father”

Heaven is not a place to which you go; it is just where you are. You can enter heaven NOW. Good men and woman from time to time have made this discovery, and henceforth “All is well.”

They have ceased to hurry, for the journey is over. They are no longer pilgrims and strangers, but children in the Father's home. The first thing we understand when we awake is, that there

has not been any journey, or passing over and through vast spaces. We are just where we always have been – at home, alive for evermore. There is no separation from anyone we love, or from any good that is ours. To enter heaven is to be lifted into a larger consciousness of God, and in this consciousness we possess much more really all those whom we love. We are nearer to you, and we often talk together. There is no parting but only greater unity. No belief in distance and space is possible on the spiritual plain. I can only remember it when I wish to understand your conditions. In the clearer light we can no longer hold the idea of limitations. All is ours and all is yours. To become spiritually minded is life and peace. No suggestion of the carnal mind can ever produce good.

Thank God for the secret stir of life on your earth, like the sap in the tree, sending forth life exultant into every part. A glorious liberty is opening up before you. The captives are being set free, old bonds are bursting, fetters of ancient creeds are being snapped asunder. Be not dismayed, the battle is God's. Do not hug your chains; let go. Yield to the highest within you. And so become one with the great good, pouring forth healing and blessing through every waiting channel. The whole race is being lifted on to a higher plain. This work is going on in your very midst. We are full of thanksgiving at the thought that you may know the freedom of the children of

God. Conscious union with God is your whole salvation; spirit, soul, and body. The knowledge of God's oneness with man, with you, is the open door to freedom. Jesus came to show you the way, for Christ is the Way.

I see you have not understood me about mind and thinking. This is a very wide subject. I can give you only the main points. The sense mentality, that delicate medium for spiritual truth, has shared in falsity – separateness – when it should have been the perfect channel for the one and only mind. Crammed by false thinking from the outer, it should have remained open to the divine inner and the only real, fed from the higher source, the real bread and the true blood, which is Christ. It is the power to bring into subjection all sense perceptions, all false minds, alive in every part of the body. Every atom of your body should be under control, lest the hand, foot, or brain should gain supremacy, rule you, and bring about confusion.

The sense of separateness in every sense is your great enemy. We beg you to let the mind of the Christ control. It is wisdom, it is love, and it is unity. Let this mind hold you, control you – sweeping through the outer body of flesh as its lord and king; so that each breath shall rekindle and glow. Ay, even the very dry bones shall reunite and breathe. So shall you die to sin and the sense of separateness, but live unto Christ. You will read and understand in your hearts. ΩΩΩ



## LOVE



### OUR CLOSING THOUGHT

“What is it all about then? ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your mind, your body, and your neighbour as yourself.’ The rest of all the theories that may be concocted by man are nothing, if these are just lived. Love your neighbour as yourself in the associations day by day, preferring as did the Christ who died on the cross rather than preferring the world be His without a struggle. Know, then, that as He had His cross, so have you. May you take it with a smile. You can, if you will let Him bear it with you. Do it!” 3976-29 ΩΩΩ

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