



# The Rainbow Journal

No. 89 January 2016

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## **FROM THE EDITOR**

Welcome to our first edition of the New Year. No doubt this year will be another year of turmoil and changes on the world scene. The spectre of climate change is moving into center stage as world weather patterns are becoming more extreme with increasing numbers of casualties and destruction of our habitat.

It is in these times of distress and affliction that we begin to turn more inwards, attempting to find some sort of meaning in the chaos and as we look for inner peace. As has been said before, it is not outer circumstances that determine who we are but how we respond to them. In the end we must take responsibility for the world we, together with our ancestors, have created. If we are not satisfied with the world as we now view it then it is up to us to change it. - *Brian Alderson ΩΩΩ*

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## **THE SECOND COMING**

According to Bible scripture and Christian theology the Second Coming is a time when Jesus Christ will return to earth in fulfilment of His promises and to fulfil the prophecies made about Him. According to Matthew 24:30 Jesus said, "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory." Certain sections of the Book of Revelation are also said to refer to this event. "I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty." (Revelation 19:11-15).

Taken literally the above sounds more like the return of Atilla the Hun than the Second Coming of the "gentle Jesus, meek and mild." One may wonder why, at His return "all the nations shall mourn."

It must be taken into account that the writings from John were his attempts at describing his visions and one may understand that it may be very difficult to describe in words with John's limited vocabulary the details of his visions and readers could get very distorted impressions from these scriptures.

There is much written about why Jesus came to earth in the first place. In fact the whole of the New Testament is about this. He himself said "I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." There could be a deep spiritual meaning behind this statement. As written in the book 'Christ in You', when describing the seven days of creation, it states "God gave the two lights, the greater and the lesser. These symbolise the lights of the two understandings – human and divine." One of these two lights is the physical light that dispels physical darkness and the other is spiritual light that illuminates the soul. Once one experiences this spiritual light he or she is said to be 'enlightened.' Jesus brought this light into the world creating new hope, faith and goodwill to all that were touched by it. He healed the sick, not only healing those with physical illnesses and disease, but also healed the illness of souls by driving out inner demons that were barriers to spiritual light.

- What he was doing was raising the spiritual consciousness of those he came in contact with through his messages and teachings, and in particular by the way he himself lived, setting himself up as example for other to follow. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

So here we are 2,000 years later living in a world which seems to have lost this spiritual consciousness. We are not following the basic commandment of Jesus that we are to 'love one another' expressed in other religions as the Golden Rule to 'do unto others as you would have others do unto you.' Instead we continue to resort to violence and killing to resolve differences and disputes.

For a period up to the birth of Jesus there existed a Jewish sect called the Essenes who, according to the Edgar Cayce readings “ ... *dedicated their lives, their minds, their bodies to a purpose, to a seeking for that which had been to them a promise of old.... Hence, there was the continued preparation and dedication of those who might be the channels through which this chosen vessel might enter -- through choice -- into this material realm. Thus in Carmel -- where there were the chief priests and leaders of this faith -- there were the maidens chosen who were dedicated to this purpose.... Among them was Mary, the beloved, the chosen one.*”

These Essenes through their collective spiritual consciousness created what is called a 'collective consciousness' of spirituality which set the stage for the entrance into the world of a spiritual leader.

This second coming then is a time when there is a sufficient amount of spiritual consciousness amongst us to recreate that collective consciousness that will pave the way for a paradigm shift from a world based on materialism and separatism to one where we embrace the Golden rule and obey the commandment of Jesus to love one another – even our enemies.

So rather than waiting for some all-powerful ruler to descend upon the earth to destroy all the 'bad' people we must realise that as individuals and collectively it is up to us to create a world where, as promised 'peace will reign for a thousand years'. -  
BDA ΩΩΩ

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## AN EXPERIMENT IN PREJUDICE

Two recent terror attacks in Paris and in San Bernardino, USA by people claiming allegiance to the Islamic State group have created concern and fear of Muslim extremism around the world. Although, following the attacks, some people have called for interfaith dialogue, some of the fear over ISIS has unfortunately translated into deep prejudice of Islam and its followers.

As a test of peoples prejudice towards Islam two Dutch reporters asked members of the public to offer their views on several of the 'shocking' verses from a book presented as the Qur'an. The pair highlighted what they described as the most “shocking verses that are in general contrast with our Western norms and values.”

Some of those verses included: "If you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me...you will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters." "I do not allow for a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man. ... You will have to cut off her hand. Do not forgive her." "Happy is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks."

After being read these and similar passages the people were appalled.

“It bothers me that some people see these writings as the absolute truth.” was

one response.

One woman tells the duo "To me, this sounds like they want to oppress you and force you to believe what they believe."

A girl responded, "Cutting off people's hands...I mean, apparently that's just the way they are."

A young man who was interviewed alongside two friends said he thought that children would be affected by this kind of teaching. "If you've been raised with this book and these kind of thoughts it's going to influence the way you think" he said.

When the people were asked how the book compares to the Bible, one man said the Bible is "a lot less harsh and a bit more peaceful."

Another said, "The story in the Bible is told very differently," while a woman says of Muslims, "The world is changing and I think they should have to adapt to it."

There was just one catch. While the cover of the book the pair presented read "The Noble Qur'an" what was inside the cover was a copy of the Bible. The passages quote by the pair were taken directly from it.

The best part of the experiment was when it's revealed to the participants that they've actually been listening to passages from the Bible. Most of people interviewed could not believe it.

"It's all just prejudice, really," one person admitted. "I always try not to be prejudiced myself, but apparently I already am. It's just something you do unconsciously."

After the experiment the duo commented "Muslims have been accused of following a faith that has no place in our Western culture. What about Christianity, a religion that has influenced our culture greatly?" BDA ΩΩΩ

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## TIME TO ACCEPT REINCARNATION

It was in 1901 when Edgar Cayce gave one of his first recorded 'readings', which was on himself when he diagnosed his own state of health. But it was not until 22 years later, after thousands of readings diagnosing the health of his subjects, that he first quoted a previous life of a client. Towards the end of the short reading on the subject's personality he uttered two short sentences that were to shake the foundations of his Christian beliefs: "*Third appearance on his plane. He was once a monk.*" (5717-1)

The concept of reincarnation shocked and challenged Edgar Cayce and his family. They were deeply religious people, doing this work to help others was motivated by what his Christian faith taught him to do. Eventually, after anguishing inner struggles, he accepted what his psychic voice proclaimed, which led to an entirely new way of using his abilities that came to be known as 'Life Readings'. The concept of reincarnation was examined extensively in future readings and would become the second major topic examined by the sleeping Cayce.

The problem with the Edgar Cayce readings is that they do not stand up to scientific examination and testing. There are no known scientific experiments that can list people's previous lives that they are supposed to have lived. Furthermore the vast majority of us have no recollection whatsoever of ever having lived before.

However a number of researches into reincarnation have collected and recorded information that they have gathered on the reincarnation of individuals. Probably the best known, if not most respected, collection of data that could be accepted as scientific proof that reincarnation is real, is the life's work of Dr. Ian

Stevenson. Instead of relying on hypnosis to verify that an individual has had a previous life, he instead chose to collect thousands of cases of children who spontaneously (without hypnosis) remember a past life. Dr. Ian Stevenson used this approach because spontaneous past life memories in a child can be investigated using strict scientific protocols.

From a purely scientific perspective hypnosis, while useful in researching into past lives, is not considered reliable. In order to collect his data, Dr. Stevenson methodically documented the child's statements of a previous life. Then he identified the deceased person the child remembered being, and verified the facts of the deceased person's life that matched the child's memory. He even matched birthmarks and birth defects to wounds and scars on the deceased, verified by medical records. His strict methods systematically ruled out all possible 'normal' explanations for the child's memories.

Dr. Stevenson devoted over forty years to the scientific documentation of past life memories of children from all over the world. He collected 3,000 cases in his files. Many people, including skeptics and scholars, agree that these cases offer the best evidence yet for reincarnation.

Despite the amount of supporting evidence for reincarnation it is still not generally accepted, especially in scientific circles, and certainly does not effect the way we view politics, economics, justice or each other. The edict of Jesus that "What we sow we reap" apparently is considered as only applying to this lifetime. However some courts around the world evidently believe in reincarnation when sentencing convicted criminals. For instance in 1994 a Court in Oklahoma in the U.S. handed down a sentence of 30,000 years to a child rapist on multiple counts with 5,000 years for each of six counts against him. He will obviously have to spend many, many incarnations incarcerated. In one other case that year Allan Wayne McLaurin was sentenced to 21,250 years, but upon appeal, his sentence was reduced by 500 years. He must have been overjoyed with the lesser sentence!

The question we may ask ourselves is: Does whether or not we believe in reincarnation make any difference to the way we live?

Possibly if the concept of reincarnation could be proven beyond any reasonable doubt and accepted it would change the entire course of human thought. It would give humanity certainty of its future, reveal the *justice* of God, stimulate men to make the world a better place to dwell in so that in the next life they might receive the benefit, and give added force to every symbolic expression of our true humanity as beings created in the image of God.

With the acceptance of reincarnation we realise that our eternal spirits guide the body and applied intelligence rules the earth. That genius is a combination of our past experience and inspiration.

The truth of man's universal immortality will emancipate our minds from ignorance and prejudice. And with the proof that man's salvation from selfishness lies only in our own efforts toward justice, kindness, love and mercy, in the spirit of humanity and therefore of the whole, in the service of man, we shall come nearer to the fulfilment of the prophesy of old of one God, one humanity, one law and one state in a federation of the world.

Genuine democracy is nowhere indicated more clearly than in the loss of the wealth, the power, the tyranny, the title of those of us who may use them selfishly and yet at death we can take with us only that character of ourselves with which we

must live in the next life on earth.

From this, not being found out, or either a clever lawyer, a corrupt judge or flaws on man's law can save us, for that which we sow will we certainly reap. *BDA*

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## THE TWO WORLDS

*A draft of the following article has been sitting on my computer for two and a half years and is particularly relevant at this time as more and more reports of terrorist attacks are being broadcast.*

Recently, following our local TV networks going digital, the channel "Al-Jazeera" has been added to New Zealand's free-to-air TV networks. This is a purely news channel, with the exception of a few current affairs documentaries, and most of the news is centred around Africa and the Middle East where there are currently numerous on-going conflicts.

Like most news channels Al-Jazeera focusses on negative news, perhaps working under the precept that 'good news is no news'. A common element in each news item is the number of casualties involved - how many people have died in each incident. As an example I noted down the events reported and the casualties quoted in just one broadcast:

*Egypt* - Anti-coup protest - 3 killed

*Syria* - Government troupes ambush - Dozens killed

*Lebanon* - Car bomb - 6 killed

*Yemen* - Mortar shell hits funeral tent - 13+ killed

*Afghanistan* - Suicide bombing- 3+ killed

*Somalia* - Bombing - 7 killed

*Brazil* - Floods and mudslides - 30+ killed

*India* - Train crash - 16 killed.

As mentioned all the above incidents were reported in a single news broadcast and if one adds up the casualties we come to a total of around 100 to 150 people. Not a lot when one considered that literally *millions* of people die every year from violent causes.

Our local TV channel, in its international news section, seems to only pick out news events having the greatest numbers of casualties, while in the local news section, because of our comparatively small population of 4.5 million, all New Zealand murders and other violent deaths seem to be worthy of reporting. My niece describes the early part of this daily news as the 'morgue report'.

The media seems to sending us the message that we live in a world in which we should be fearful. This morning, as I walked past roadside boards advertising the local newspapers I noted the headlines 'Swimmer killed in Shark attack' and another 'Horror Stingrays.' So even our oceans are risky places to be in.

Perhaps these news broadcasters believe they are giving us a picture of what is going on in the world, which is all bad. However if these people really wanted to give us unbiased facts about what is killing us they should do so. For example are we aware that around 1.25 *million* people die each year from traffic accidents? A further 450 *thousand* are murdered? This is apart from the hundreds of thousands that die during military conflicts. These statistics suggest that our roads are life-threatening and with reports of home invasions it appears that we are never secure – even in our own homes.

This is the world the media seems to portray. A world full of danger where we

should live in fear of a home invader or a jealous partner or of dying in a car crash after being hit by a car driven by a drunken driver or if we are in the wrong place at the wrong time we will be blown up by a suicide bomber or die being 'collateral damage' during military activities.

Giving this some thought and looking around me I realised that I am living in two worlds. One world is my day-to-day world where I live in a friendly neighbourhood and where there is a general atmosphere of peace and harmony. I rarely encounter situations where there is conflict and find that, with a cordial smile, I can communicate with whoever I come in contact in a positive manner, avoiding any form of confrontation. When I travel on the bus and go shopping the people who serve me invariably do so with courtesy and politeness.

During my whole life I have rarely been in a situation where there was a potential of my suffering bodily harm through a violent act of another and I have never encountered one that was life threatening. So this is my world, and I suspect that it is the same world in which most of our readers live. There is certainly what might be called dramatic situations in our lives and verbal clashes, but overall I live in a peaceful and friendly environment.

So these are the two worlds. One is the world in which I live. The other is a world full of violence, crime, natural disasters, conflicts and wars. A very dangerous world which should cause us to be afraid. This the world we see on TV in the news sections and even in programs purportedly designed to entertain us with consistent themes being based on murder and physical and sexual violence. It is also noted that in recent years the theme of many fictional TV programs and movies has been centred around terrorist threats with the potential of killing thousands of people.

According to a recent UN statistical report around 450,000 people are murdered each year. This equates to 8,600 per week or 1,236 per day, so as far as the media is concerned it would be impractical to report every single murder. One may therefore wonder what would make a particular murder newsworthy. One journalist's website lists five factors which would be considered by media outlets when deciding if a story is newsworthy.

These factors are *timing* where the stories are of recent incidents related to topics of interest. The next is *significance*. When it comes to people it is the number that are affected which is important. Thus a single person murdered would not normally be considered significant whereas perhaps ten or more as in the case of the U.S. massacres in schools would be ranked worthy enough to be reported around the world. *Proximity* is also of importance as events that happen near to us usually have more significance. The next important factor is *prominence* of the individual or individuals involved in the story e.g. famous people and celebrities. And finally there is *human interest*, stories which appeal to readers and viewers emotions. Where human interest is a main factor the reporting is aimed at evoking emotional responses.

With the above factors in mind one may question what were the ingredients of the murder that caused such media frenzy around the world with newspaper headlines: "London Soldier Hacked To Death By Machete-Wielding Terrorist." When considering each of the factors it would appear that only the *human interest* element would have made the story such an internationally newsworthy event. In particular the gruesomeness of the murder where the victim was butchered and decapitated in front of bystanders with the scene being captured on video.

We can therefore understand why the event became headline news around the world. But why was the story dragged out over days, even weeks? Here on the other side of the world day after day we viewed images of friends and sympathisers laying flowers at the scene of the incident, interviews with the grieving families with the details of the incident being repeated over and over again. These later stories in particular could have only one motive behind them: to provoke emotional responses.

Note two key words in the headlines 'soldier' and 'terrorists' which in themselves can evoke emotions particularly if one has a partner or relative who is a soldier on active duty in some foreign country. A 'terrorist' suggests a person whose motive for violent acts, usually with the victims chosen randomly, are designed to create fear and terror.

Every murder and violent death, whether by intent or by accident, leaves behind grieving loved ones, widows or widowers, children with a lost parent, distraught friends and relatives, so to highlight the grief of one particular victim at the expense of all others is unfair and one can only assume that there is an ulterior motive behind such wide publicity. In the London incident the motive appears to have succeeded as following the murder there were demonstrations and some mosques were attacked and damaged. None of this would have happened had the media simply reported the simple facts being a brutal murder where the victim was beheaded and left it at that.

So when we read the daily paper or watch the TV news we are to keep in mind that what we read or see is but the tiniest fragment of what is going on every day in this wide world of ours. We should therefore guard against being persuaded to accept this tiny selection of events as a cause for fear and allow our emotions – triggered by these TV news items - to affect our judgement and behaviour. *BDA ΩΩΩ*

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## OUR REAL ENEMIES

**Soldier** : Here is better than home, eh, sir? I mean, at home if you kill someone they arrest you, here they'll give you a gun and show you what to do, sir. I mean, I killed fifteen of those buggers. Now, at home they'd hang me, here they'll give me a medal, sir." *From the Monty Python Movie "The Meaning of Life"*

If we were asked "Who are your enemies?" I suspect most of us would say that we do not have any personal enemies. If we use the Oxford dictionary definition of an enemy as 'a person actively hostile to another' we would most likely be right with respect to our not having hostile feelings *towards others*. There are people with whom we are at variance, people with whom we encounter major differences of opinion and people that have done things to annoy or even hurt us. However those of us who are seeking along a spiritual path are unlikely to express active hostility *towards them*.

That does not mean that there are not people who may be actively hostile *towards us*. We may have a neighbour or a fellow worker or a relation who, for some reason, regards us as his or her enemy. It is these people that Jesus was no doubt referring to when he gave the commandment 'love your enemies.' He was advising us on how we are to react to hostile actions directed towards us. We are not to retaliate by meeting hostility with hostility in return but we are to "love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you..."

As well as the problem of personal enemies we also face the fact that our

nation has enemies. These enemies are other nations or peoples who have regarded us, as a nation, as their enemies or who have committed acts which our leaders have regarded as hostile or at least unfriendly to us, as a nation. The ultimate act of hostility is of course war, or, to use political spin the occasions where 'military action' has been taken.

If we look at the current world situation we must conclude that international goodwill has not improved since the World War I – which was supposed to be the war to end all wars. At this very moment there are a number of armed conflicts around the world, such as the military actions taking place in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria where there has been more than 10,000 deaths in the past year alone and in at least fourteen other countries where the death toll has been between one thousand and ten thousand in the same period. Most of us may consider that these conflicts are not of our personal concern. That is unless we have one of our own serving in our nation's military forces, or have lost someone or a loved one has suffered injuries, in one of these conflict zones.

As wars are all about killing and destruction how are we, as seekers along the path in the Search for God, to deal with our conscience over these conflicts? Do we simply ignore these issues, leaving it up to our leaders and our country's military forces to deal with these situations? Do we, as patriots, give support to our governments by participating in the military forces or at least offer moral support? Or do we resist and oppose military action by our governments? These are complex issues which each of us has to come to grips with.

One thing we must remember when considering our nations enemies is that these enemies are people. Who are these people? If one listens to political rhetoric concerning our enemies one will note that speakers avoid personalising our enemies but prefer to use terms that dehumanises them. For years our enemy was communism while one of our current enemies is terrorism. Not people, but “isms.” One of our current enemies is said to be the “Taliban.” This is a radical Sunni Islamist movement - a vague word comprised of people from Afghanistan and Pakistan and other countries in the general area of Afghanistan. What we know about movements, such as the Taliban, is that the vast majority of people involved in the movement became members not because of grave decision making but because of necessity, sentimentality (e.g. misunderstood religious convictions), coercion or other unsavoury reasons. Is the 13-year-old hero-worshipping boy our enemy? The father of 9 children who doesn't know how to feed them? The grandfather who was told in no uncertain ways that he needs to join or else?

International relations, like human relations are complex matters and we must decide on our attitudes to peoples in other countries. When I reflect on this subject a quotation often comes to mind. It was given by Mahatma Gandhi during a speech made denouncing unjust laws imposed on the Indian population in South Africa when some Indians proposed armed insurrection. “There are causes for which I am prepared to die, but there is no cause for which I am prepared to kill.”

So far we have considered our enemies as people around us, those that live close to us and peoples of other countries. But our real enemies are not external, not people, but are found inside us. In this respect we use the word 'enemy' as meaning something that is harmful or prejudicial to us and takes the form of negative emotions.

On this basis one of our greatest negative emotions is fear. In the animal

kingdom fear is a basic instinct that is used as a tool of survival. When an animal encounters a situation where the animal is felt threatened the emotion of fear kicks in causing the pumping of adrenalin into the bloodstream in preparation for the "fight or flight" response of the sympathetic nervous system. This is a powerful response mechanism as we can witness in the ferocious attacks by many animals when they are motivated by this emotion.

In the animal kingdom this mental state of fear is brought on only when the animal is physically confronted with a perceived threat. It is brought on in the animals ever present 'now.' Animals have no fear of the future nor do they fear death. We humans are different in that we can experience fear over some perceived future event rather than a danger in the 'now'; in the present time. This is often experienced as anxiety over what may happen in the future and we go through the mental motions of trying to deal with this event in our minds as if it was happening now. We imagine what may happen and we try to deal with it, experiencing all the negative emotions related to it in the process.

As a personal example, most of my life I had a particular fear of being poked or stabbed in the eye with some sharp object and mentally experienced the horror and pain of it. A few years ago I was diagnosed as having a cataract in one eye. A date was set a few weeks after the diagnosis for an operate to remove the cataract. In the period leading up to the operation I was constantly imagining having a doctor poke something in my eye which caused me continued distress as I was feared the impending operation. Day after day I would go through the same agonising mental pictures. The only thing that gave me courage enough to face the operation was the knowledge that thousands of people had come through the same operation successfully, so perhaps I would too. When the operation finally took place my feelings were like a deflated balloon for discomfort during the operation, which lasted about 30 minutes, was minimal. The operation itself experienced in the 'now' was nothing compared to the fear and anxiety of the mental rehearsing of the event.

The reason why fear is our enemy is because it is not about the 'now' and it distorts our rational thinking which can lead us to do things which we would never consider doing had we not been motivated by fear. Politicians know the power of fear which is why they play on this emotion to persuade us to take actions, including going to war, which we would never have considered had it not been for the fear instilled in us. Fear can even kill us. In a book entitled *Psychosomatics* by Howard R. and Martha E. Lewis the authors write an example of the power of fear. It stated then in many cases of snakebites the poison the bite injected was insufficient to cause death, but the fear the bite induced was sufficient to cause fatal heart attacks "There is some evidence that extreme anxiety, in the form of panic and terror, can be fatal."

In recent times, particularly following the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in the U.S. (and in Australia the Bali bombings) our main fear has been the threat of being attacked by terrorists. It was on the basis of this fear that the United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in 2001 with the main purpose being to capture or kill the perpetrators and organisers of the 9/11 attack. Since that time the documented total number of *civilians* killed as a result of this military action is in excess of 26,000 with a further 39,000 wounded Yet many of those responsible for the 9/11 attack are still at large. The only motivating force behind this continued carnage appears to be the fear that if the warfare is stopped terrorism will increase.

Instead of attempting to conquer our fear of terrorism or communism or other

'isms' by living in the present and searching within ourselves for the answers to our fears we are inclined to direct our fears outwards. In doing so we may take out our fears on other people, which, in the form of warfare results in disastrous consequences.

Another of man's great enemies is selfishness. As a Cayce reading stated "Selfishness is the greater fault in most individuals." It is our seeking to gratify our material wants with disregard for the needs of others that is causing most of the conflict around the world today. Selfishness can be the cause of wars. In a reading given in the late 1930's, at a time when a number of people had forecast impending war (World War Two) in which United States would be involved, Edgar Cayce was asked what would be the cause of the war. His answer was in one word - "Selfishness."

The reason why we have perceived enemies both external and internal is that we still live in a world in which we are controlled by our egos. It is our egos that have enemies. It is our egos that will direct us to defend our bodies by taking out our fears on others. It is our egos that make it difficult for us to live in a higher plane of consciousness – the Christ Consciousness – because when we live in that plane our egos will disappear. Throughout history there have been those that achieved enlightenment, reached Buddhahood, received salvation, Christ-consciousness, or whatever we may call this raised state of consciousness in which we are no longer ruled by our egos but are governed by the spirit of God that is within us. For the rest of us we can only work at it and show courage to overcome those enemies within us, for it is these enemies of negative emotions and thoughts within that must be destroyed rather than the enemy without.

FROM THE EDGAR CAYCEREADINGS

*Fear not he that may destroy the body, but rather fear him that may destroy the soul in torment. 281-59*

*(Q) Do I have any enemies of whom I must be careful?*

*(A) Yes, - the greatest enemy is yourself, as it is with everyone else. To your own self be true, and you will not be false to others. Enemies are only those that are selfish in themselves. If you consider them as selfish, you are as selfish as they. 2953-1*

*(Q) Were evil forces warring within me, or was it my reasoning mind that caused this depression?*

*(A) As has been given from the beginning, "There is set before you good and evil. Choose." In the choosing, in the setting of your will in that direction or the other direction allows those influences to become magnified or lessened by that in the Promises. Else why should there have been the shedding of blood that there should be an Advocate with the Creative Forces? For He overcame the flesh, the death, and evil - the devil. So in choosing yourself in the ways to go, these that are as influences are but as signposts, knowing that you have passed this or that test, even as He passed through the garden, the Cross, the grave, hell, and rose in the newness of all being put under submission; for having overcome He became the way, the light, the Saviour. So, in those experiences that would overcome, as He has given, when you are beset by those forces that would unbalance, unroot you from that you have believed, even as He, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for you savour the things that are of the earth." Mind not that as would destroy the body, rather that as would destroy the soul, the hold upon Him who is life, light, and*

## THE THING THAT MATTERS

A few days ago, while having a conversation with a family member expressing concerns over local politics and international conflicts, she quoted from an inspirational book she had just read in which it was stated that 'nothing matters'. At the time I could not find a suitable response to this quote and by coincidence the following day, when I was reading Conversations With God book 2, I came across the same statement “. . . you must understand the greatest truth: *Nothing Matters.*” This message rather annoyed me as I cannot understand how nothing in our lives matters. Does the way we live and conduct ourselves matter? Does it matter if we are selfish, commit crimes and hurt other people? Not satisfied with my understanding over this I Googled 'nothing matters' and came up with the following which offers one way of understanding what is behind this message:

*Nothing you do really has any significance. You are just one individual among a species of primate with billions of relatives living on a tiny rock in the middle of nowhere. So why do you worry all the time?*

*Why do you fret over what other insignificant primates think about your own insignificance? Who cares what they think? The rest of the Universe certainly doesn't. Why do you panic about deadlines and let that panic paralyze you? Trust me, your work is not worth the panic. Your work doesn't matter. There's no point in getting all worked up about work. Why do you care so much about getting money? So that you can buy things that don't matter? If you have enough food to eat, what's more money going to do anyway? Why do you hold on to the hurt from when others have wronged you? What they did has no significance at all. Let it go: set it adrift among the stars and all the empty blackness.*

*There is a certain usefulness to the nihilistic vertigo that comes from casting your gaze across a cosmic scale. We silly apes spend so much time fretting and worrying about our imagined importance that we miss out on The Thing.*

*The Thing is life is a remarkable and unlikely gift. It doesn't matter if you are religious or anti-religious, or some more reasonable perspective in between—life is a gift. Some of the power of the Universe coalesced into a little bit of matter and energy that can know it's here: you. You can see a sunset, climb a tree, kiss another living fragment of the Universe, and laugh. Even more powerful is your ability to extend grace, friendship, and kindness to other bits of the Universe. You can't do a single thing of cosmic importance. Hell, the whole lot of us can barely throw small bits of metal at nearby worlds. But, you can perform acts of incredible subjective value when you make another life a little better than it was before you found it.*

*So tell someone to have an amazing day. Tell a stranger that their shoes look awesome. Embrace your smallness when you think about your problems and stress, but own your incredible power when dealing with other living things. You are small, but you are very big to other small things.*

*Enjoy the freedom that comes with being alive. Don't let the grind of all our imaginary importance take away The Thing. - Mike McHargue ΩΩΩ*

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is curious that memories of some short, insignificant happenings in our distant past that have no consequences in themselves or have no great revelatory value will stick with us all our lives. Perhaps this is because they resonate with some deep truth hidden inside us. One such incident I often recall was my reading a letter to the editor in a Women's Weekly magazine belonging to my mother. I must have been about ten or twelve years old at the time. The letter was apparently in response to publicity concerning our rights over some issue. All I can remember is a sentence in the letter when the writer stated "If we all carried out our responsibilities our rights would automatically be taken care of."

All of us as citizens and taxpayers demand our rights and expect our governments to ensure that they are protected and upheld. As a nation we are a party to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Sadly it is true that we have become so dependent on Human Rights and the concept of rights in general that we have become morally lazy. We unconsciously divide rights into two categories; ours and theirs. We will fight to the death for our rights. Our right to free speech, to own property, to plunder the earth's resources. When it comes to the rights of others we are content to sign a petition or donate a few dollars. If it does not effect us directly it is not important. What all of us need to do is to start thinking in terms of responsibility. Human responsibility. Our ethical development will not move forward until we accept a strong sense of responsibility towards ourselves and the world we live in.

The idea that we must accept this responsible is set out explicitly in Article 1 of the above Declaration: "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*" If we would just live up to this one concept then everything else would follow. Unfortunately we do not. We do not because our politics and the economy that surrounds us is based on the concept that some people are worth more than others. We do not because we see the world through our assumptions and beliefs about the world, rather than through rational and critical thinking. Furthermore, we do not because it is easier not to, at least in the short run. Thus we need some further impetus to move us to take up our responsibilities as members of the human race.

As a species we seem to be more interested in finding exceptions and excuses than in just following the simple standards that would see us evolve as ethical beings. If we are going to enhance our morality, then we will need to do it the hard way which is by thinking through our decisions and taking responsibility for both decision and consequence.

Some of the codification of our rights are set down in the laws of our country. But if we have the right to marry and form relationships under those laws, we have the responsibility to take those relationships seriously and to aid our children to form good relationships. If we have the right to education, we have the responsibility to learn in whatever manner suits us best. If all people have the right to the essentials of life, then all people have the responsibility to ensure that the essentials of life are available to *everybody*.

One consequence of our right of free speech is especially important; that is the responsibility to speak thoughtfully, truthfully and in a manner to build up the community. Of all our rights, the right of free speech is probably the most abused.

We vilify and malign each other and claim the right to say what we think. These disparaging thoughts about others should be kept to ourselves. Often these derogatory words are purely unsupported opinion and completely wrong, or even outright lies. In the long run verbal attacks against others only belittles us rather than defining who we really are. When we speak from the spirit within we are trying to think before we talk, to speak only what we know is true and to speak in a way that makes the world a better place.

Another aspect of responsible speech is the responsibility to think critically about our assumptions. This responsibility may in fact be the most difficult of all of them because it demands that we step outside of ourselves and our comfort zone to check whether we are being reasonable or not. Whenever we have to fall back on 'common sense' or 'everybody knows' or similar generalized statements we should have an alarm going off in our head warning us that we have stopped thinking critically.

The results of our accepting our responsibilities before demanding our rights will prevent the 'my rights' versus 'your rights' problem that we now face. These are all our responsibility. We either live them or we do not. We cannot force them on others; we can only choose to live them out ourselves. Yet if we do take living out our responsibilities seriously it will also challenge others to follow suit. We live in a system and any change in one part of the system will result in changes in all parts.

#### FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD BOOK 2

The notion of individual *responsibility* has been distorted to mean "every man for himself." This is the new philosophy that imagines itself to be harkening back to the Early American tradition of rugged individualism.

But the original sense of individual responsibility upon which the American vision and the American dream was based found its deepest meaning and its highest expression in the concept of Brotherly Love.

What made America great was not that every man struggled for his own survival, but that every man accepted individual responsibility for the survival of all.

America was a nation that would not turn its back on the hungry, would never say no to the needy, would open its arms to the weary and the homeless, and would share its abundance with the world. Yet as America became great, Americans became greedy. Not all, but many. And, as time went on, more and more.

As Americans saw how good it was to have it, they sought to have it even better. Yet there was only one way to have more and more and more. Someone else had to have less and less and less.

#### FROM THE EDGAR CAYCE READINGS

"There come periods in your experience when doubts arise as to that which brings material success in your experience, and you see about you those that disregard law, order, or even the *rights* of their fellow man - yet from the material angle they appear to succeed in gaining more of this world's goods. And they are apparently entrusted with the activities even among their fellow man that will have to do with the lives and activities of many souls. Then you, in your ignorance, proclaim: "What is the use of trying to be good? What is the use of setting a high moral or mental or spiritual standard, when such succeed in entering into the joys of the earth?" They indeed, my son, have their reward in that single experience. But have you looked into their hearts and seen the trouble and doubt there? Have you

looked into their lives, in their associations with themselves, and seen the fear, the doubt, the shame even often that crouches there? Rather, my son, live each day, each hour, each association, in such a way and manner that you cannot ever look upon the activities of that day and feel not ashamed to present them to your Maker! - 531-3  
BDA ΩΩΩ

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## FROM HERE AND THERE

### WHEN THE STUDENT IS READY THE TEACHER APPEARS

The above saying has a number of interpretations most of which suggest that when we have the right attitude and motivation someone – a teacher - will come into our lives who will provide us with the information and experience we need. However there is a deeper meaning in that the teacher can take many forms other than human. For me at least, it has usually been a book.

One particular incident in my life epitomizes this. A few decades ago I had purchased the book 'Many Mansions' by Gina Cerminara which dealt with the readings of Edgar Cayce and reincarnation and karma in particular. One day at morning tea where I worked, out of the blue, I said to my colleague Toni "I have a book that you might like to read." That evening I lent him the book and a few days later he returned it to me without saying a word, other than 'thanks.' Then a little later when I was alone with Toni he said to me:

"I have a confession to make. I had been feeling depressed for some time and wishing I had something I could believe in. One night I did something I had not done for a long time. I got on my knees and prayed for God's help and guidance. The very next day you said you had a book that I might like. I have read it. It was the answer to my prayer."

### WAR GAMES

On both my TV and my computer recently there have been adverts for the latest computer games. One is titled 'War Games', while another is 'The Game of War'. This is the message we are sending our young ones – that war is a game and can be fun to play – and where we are the heroes and those we kill are villains. The object of the game is to reign down death and destruction on the enemy.

Once upon a time war demanded bravery as participants on both sides physically faced each other with their only weapons being swords and shield and fighting was by hand to hand combat. Nowadays, war is a very different 'game'.

The problem with war games and the misinformation we hear about war is that we are not dealing with the reality of war. The reality is that war dehumanises those involved. The reality of war is that the conflict is not between nations but the rulers of these nations. These rulers sit safely in their palatial residences while the military personnel – the 'canon fodder' – are the ones that perform the killing and destruction, and may be killed in the process.

Those who have been to war and have blood on their hands may be called heroes but have returned home with their souls damaged, for as ultimately we are all one, so killing another is killing a part of ourselves.

"War destroys people's souls. Most people focus on physical injuries, but the invisible injuries can take a lifetime to heal and affects the lives of generations to come." - *Emmanuel Jal (Emmanuel Jal is a South Sudanese musician, former child soldier, and political activist. His autobiography, War Child: A Child Soldier's*

Story, was published in 2009.)

## CRIMINAL OR NOT?

In a previous Rainbow Journal (September 2015 under 'Here and There') we briefly discussed two definitions of the word 'criminal'. One definition being a person who has committed a crime and the other being a person who has been *convicted* of committing a crime.

Nowadays when people travel overseas it is usual for travellers to declare any criminal convictions on arrival at a foreign country and the granting of entry in that country may depend on what the traveller has declared. If the traveller declares that he or she has no previous convictions and it is later found that the declaration is untrue then he or she could be deported, fined, or worse.

There is a dilemma facing some New Zealand residents who, many years ago (before 1986), were convicted of homosexual acts but because the laws under which they were convicted have since been repealed what they did a long time ago is no longer considered as a criminal act. So theoretically they are no longer criminals. Unfortunately they carry criminal convictions and their 'criminal records' are still on file so legally they are criminals and when travelling overseas may need to declare that fact. Proving the saying 'the law is an ass.' *BDA*

## MONEY AND POWER

The laws, regulations and government policies in our country do not reflect what our society thinks of itself or what it wishes to be, but rather on where the power behind our government lies. - *WAB ΩΩΩ*

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# CHRIST IN YOU

## PART II FIFTH LESSON

### The True Self

How often we have to remind you of the truth you have already learnt! Spirit is the only substance; exactly as the sap is the true life of the tree, so also your spiritual being is the cause of your natural existence. You can never impart a truth until it has become alive within yourself. We have many things to tell you about the life here, but at present your highest good is to learn the truths best applicable to your present condition.

When I speak of the wholeness of the race and the mystical body, I do not want to give you wrong ideas about your individual responsibility. Each member is a complete worker. What you see on the plane of the senses is to us shadowy, vague, and often meaningless. You are to make real, to create, to bring into existence, spiritual realities by living on the only real plane of life. This is to bring in the new heaven and the new earth. Your spiritual eyes will open gradually, not unto an unfamiliar environment, but into an intensely real life, wherein dwells righteousness.

We are working all over the world in bands to establish true unity and brotherhood. We shall succeed if you will unite with us. Is it not worth while? True unity is not to separate heaven from earth, but to bring the kingdom of heaven on to earth. For this we labour and pray – watch and wait – and we shall never cease until the Lord Christ has come to His own, the Christ of God who spoke with the lips of Jesus; the Christ of God who dwells within, the great deliverer of mankind from the bondage of sin, flesh and the world of sense. For the Son of man must indeed be lifted up, and the false man of sense become nought, that we all may be one – for

Christ is God. Clearly you see the importance of denying self and following the voice and guidance of Christ!

In the morning of the day commence by cleaning your heart from within (the cleansing of the body follows as the shadow follows a man in the full sunshine). First cast out false thinking, prejudice, thoughts of sickness, fear and pain, by true reasoning and simple, childlike faith in God. As you rise, your thoughts shall be of strength, love, a strong desire to bless. Now follows your prayer, a free and full consecration of all for good, that God only may be glorified, a prayer of steadfast assurance – Take no thought what you shall eat or what you shall put on. The life is more than meat, the body than raiment. It is true that God will supply your every need. In all your thoughts and deeds, your intercourse with personalities, remember that you are on the plane of spirit, seeking first the kingdom of God, the only reality.

Oh, you are rich beyond human language! Leave you chamber “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” Let your whole being join in the only true life-work – “That they all may be one.” Amen, Amen, Amen. ΩΩΩ

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## 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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