

Welcome to you all. This ITC Conference will run for the third time through zoom only.

Zoom has become our preferred tool; it makes it easy and affordable for everybody to participate in this conference.

This year's topic, "Theosophy: Discovering the **Eternal Sun** of Truth," is challenging.

With technical subjects we can always keep a distance between our technical understanding and the moral consequences implied by that understanding.

But our Theosophical understanding of truth goes directly to the core of our being. Changes in our concept of truth can have enormous consequences.

And if we find a higher truth, in this moment of enlightenment, and in our excitement, we quite naturally want to share this.

How do we do this: to make others acquainted with greater truth and not overwhelm them?

People can easily feel that they are being somehow "corrected." It makes them insecure and gives them a loss of self-confidence.

If there is a higher Truth of which people have different reflections, what do we do then? This issue is not new.

We find many parables about this subject; for instance, one: called "*the elephant and the blind men*" (**picture**) as one of the most popular, because if you see the drawing of the elephant and blind men, it's clear what happens in our thinking when we each just have a part.

The question from this picture is how will the blind men deal with their acquired knowledge? Will they share it with the other blind individuals and invite them to explore each other's part of the elephant?

There are many opinions about truth written with capital letters. Even within theosophical circles, the view runs from "there is no truth," "truth is always personal," "truth is just a way of looking at it," and "truth is an opinion." We hope to bring clarity in this issue.

All these chaotic opinions immediately evoke an image that everything is random, which is very easy to contradict if you look around and see those processes within our range of perception, in which we can easily detect regularity, cyclic effects, and consistent behaviour.

Here are just two examples:

Cyclic motion: the planets orbit around the sun in regular periodicities, and the earth turns around its axis in 24 hours.

Of course, a greater truth can incorporate a lesser one, a partial truth, but not an untruth.

As with gravity: we all know gravity exists, of which we all have direct experience.

We can extend our knowledge by examining at what speed an object falls, describing this in a mathematical formula, and with that gravity becomes very predictable.

By this, we have extended our understanding of gravity, but our first experience retains its value.

We find it very logical when we see two unequal objects fall with different speeds, but we have to go deeper into gravity's principles.

As Newton's formula shows, if we exclude external influences, disturbances, like wind and air drag, to our surprise:, everything falls at exactly the same rate.

This is not very intuitive as we see that unequal objects fall at the same speed.

How many truths can there be?

Having two Truths with capital T about the same subject is philosophically impossible.

Personal experiences **are like** the elephant and the blind men; we each have a piece of that great truth. The question is: will we share it?

“Theosophy: Discovering the Eternal **Sun** of Truth”

As a symbol , the sun radiates in all directions just as the physical sun does. That means we all can receive sunlight.

If we are willing to peel away the clouds (layers) of our minds that block the sun, then we receive more truth. But what do we do with it? Will we assimilate this, including all the consequences? Are we ready to break our molds of mind?

Maybe we have had ideas for years that should be reviewed.

Truth is a dangerous subject to propagate.

History has already proven this to us.

Please think of the cave of Plato; the ones who have been outside the cave, when going back into the cave, are surprised at what the people chained in the cave accept as true. If one begins to tell them what he has seen outside the cave, their response is very hostile because he disrupts their peace, the illusion of the cave dwellers.

As our history shows, people have paid with their lives for proclaiming greater truth. We see this today with whistleblowers.

It is very dangerous to be a messenger of truth, not only in theosophical circles but also in science circles and in the general public.

Think of Galileo, Giordano Bruno, Descartes, Socrates, Jesus, etc., and, of course, Blavatsky; Blavatsky's life is a good example of what consequences truth telling can have.

This struggle is still taking place today, maybe even more than ever. If you look at social media with its rampant fake news, nowadays they don't kill you but just cancel you. There is no more place for you.

Once the established order is upset, it becomes dangerous. People do not like to be disturbed in their peace of mind and settled ways of thinking.

The more successful you are in spreading truth, the more resistance you evoke.

We know that for some people our Conference title, "Theosophy: Discovering the Eternal **Sun** of Truth" is too strong a statement, but we are in good company if we study the very famous letter from Master KH named the Maha Chohan letter. Master KH, one of Blavatsky's masters, wrote this letter based on his conversation with his boss, the Maha Chohan. If we value the Masters, so do we value their boss.

Up to now this letter is very popular, and has been a source of inspiration for many Theosophical Societies and their members and beyond.

It's saturated with compassion and altruism that guided the Founders of the Society in all their work.

It commits the TS to Altruism, Truth, and Universal Brotherhood, but also to earnest propagation of the teachings of Theosophy as a gateway to a life of freedom from superstition, fear, and self-centeredness.

It is an incomparable document issued by one of the truly Great Ones of this earth.

The letter has a number of strong statements:

Let me address a few statements from this letter,. First, the letter begins with the **doctrine** presented by the Masters and their messages.

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must, — supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give become ultimately triumphant as every other truth.

This statement leaves little room for doubt or qualification.

This statement makes Theosophia equal to Truth.

To be able to confirm this yourself requires continuous active thinking and self-examination.

To experience the Truth of these teachings can take a lifetime and more, and we must be careful not to fall into mere belief.

Belief will not extend our understanding or insight.

The Masters promise: we will prove this doctrine with evidence as prepared.

This statement sets aside any doubt about the existence of TRUTH with capital letters.

He continues ...

Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually enforcing its theories, unimpeachable facts for those who know, with direct inferences deducted from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science.

Saying: “gradually enforcing its theories”: makes clear that it needs time to get a greater understanding of truth, and we have to let it grow carefully.

But also, the necessary change for ourselves takes time.

The value of sciences :

Be careful; he speaks about the “*evidence furnished by modern exact science,*” but not the theories they conclude from their evidence; the evidence itself often lines up very well with theosophy doctrines.

He speaks highly of Buddhism provided it is stripped of superstition

Buddhism stripped of its superstitions is eternal truth, and he who strives for the latter is striving for Theos-sophia, Divine Wisdom, which is a synonym of truth.

Statement about morals and ethics

For our doctrines to practically react on the so called moral code or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc, we have to preach and popularise a knowledge of theosophy.

Therein lies a clear mission, to make the knowledge of Theosophy so clear that it becomes a basis, a starting point, for all our fellow humans’ ethical and moral views.

Have you ever wondered what our ethics will look like if we include the law of karma and reincarnation (cycles)? We will always encounter each other, so if we don't solve our problems now, we will have to do it next time.

Theosophists should be the first to show by example what consequences this knowledge of Theosophical teachings has.

The Maha Chohan gives a warning about Nirvana

It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining oneself Nirvana (the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom) which is, after all only an exalted and glorious selfishness, but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true Theosophist.

The Maha Chohan does not find the pursuit of nirvana **as a life goal** meaningful.

Rather, self-sacrifice to help fellow human beings, compassion, should be the core of one's life.

Statement about the intellectual part:

Further, the Maha Chohan makes it clear that the intellect is not a safe basis to serve as a starting point.

He makes a strong remark about the intellectuals in society. These have a strong influence on their fellow man in that they strengthen their materialism, which is easy to understand.

But also they incite superstition among the people who follow them unquestioningly. What they say's becomes a belief. Neither superstition nor blind beliefs lead to spiritual development. Thus the Maha Chohan says.

ITC

ITC is an open platform; ITC's point of view is clear and described well in our purposes: the first one *"To maintain the principles of the Modern Theosophical Movement presented by H. P. B. as a living power in the minds and hearts of Humanity, encouraging explorations in the light of her teachings."*

We empathize, yet we do not attempt to persuade, and we don't force.

It's your responsibility to determine what you want to investigate and what to make a part of your vision of truth. if it raises questions, we are always ready to talk about it.

As the Maha Chohan states, "Theos-Sophia, Divine Wisdom, which is a synonym of truth," so let us use that very powerful tool.

Coming together in a workshop with our different perspectives on Theos-Sophia will undeniably help us find more of that greater Truth.

The workshops allow us to see how we can help each other grow our understanding of truth.

We all have a piece of that great truth. Let's make the puzzle of the elephant and blind men more complete by fitting the pieces together.

By this, I declare the conference opened.