LEOBRAND

Letters on Living Ethics

Introduction to Agni Yoga

3. The meaning of life

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Image on the cover: "*Drops of live*" painting by Nicholas Roerich,1924.

The meaning of life

1. What is life?

Just as science cannot fully explain electricity and magnetism, it is equally unable to give a precise explanation of life itself. This is not an attempt to challenge the competence of the natural sciences and thus do its job for it, since the purpose of these writings is in line with a metaphysical sphere. The question concerning the meaning of life itself ought to be viewed from the angle of the most recent perspective of human experiences. Nevertheless, science may also be able to gain insights which would come closer to solving the mystery, especially if it can free itself from its material restraints and drop the theory of evolution. This has led science into a blind alley, even if everything can be logically explained and seemingly proved, right up to the missing link (missing link: the transition between ape and man).

Metaphysics[1] (the branch of philosophy that deals with abstract reasoning, especially of being and knowing) does not deny evolution. On the contrary, it has always held the banner high for the theory of development, but it is important to differentiate between metaphysics and theology. Theology not only discredited the metaphysics by its rigid dogmatism, even nearly eliminated it. The rigidity of theological forms of belief became the mortal enemy of any true religion and an enemy of science because religion must be evolutionary and science recognizes evolution as a fact.

There is no life and no evolution without a higher spiritual source and without recognition of a guiding deity (rationale), which for the time being we will simply label “Divinity”. We shall not go into precise detail here as this will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Nothing could have developed out of shapeless, inorganic material without assistance.

Neither the essence of life nor its inception (abiogenesis) has been scientifically explained. Biology talks about a self-preservation of certain highly complex chemical systems which are in constant flux — this is what is referred to as a living organism. Metaphysics must ask the question again as to where the instinct for survival comes from. Who or what provided the living organism with the impulse or instinct for self-preservation or breathed life into it?

Psychology speaks of stimuli and responses, as well as an inner self-awareness which leads to an inner life. This in turn is reflected in perceptions, ideas, thoughts, feelings, urges and choices. However, this is still not an explanation for life itself, but only a description of life’s various manifestations.

If in fact science should one day succeed in explaining the nature of electricity and magnetism, we would come even closer to unravelling the mystery — **this is because life itself is the constant balancing of an electrical and diamagnetic[2] state. Respiration and movement emerge from this balance of tension, pressure and radiation — and these are the most important features of life.**

Life is therefore attraction and repulsion, warmth and coldness, electricity and magnetism, affection and dislike, chemical affinity, commitment and separation — and thus it is an eternal power which never ends, but merely creates new forms of expression when the old forms are no longer in use.

[1] Greek: that which is located behind the physical
[2] generally known as magnetism (ferromagnetism)

a) Life as a subtle energy

Science has no clue or cannot find an explanation for, could be described from a metaphysical and occult point of view, as a form of subtle energy which is guided by a higher source and combines extrasensory powers with a physical form. This subtle energy or life, binds together certain chemical elements in the form of living organisms for a certain amount of time.

While these elements in certain forms of expression are bound, life becomes ever greater diversity through the experience. When death occurs, this life which is an immortal form of energy retreats for a while from the physical form of matter and a chemical transformation takes place. The energy itself remains, meaning that the experiences previously gathered by the departed life form are not lost through death, but are stored in the lower forms of consciousness especially for animals in a reservoir of the animal species. With each new birth, these experiences return again and in the case of human beings, they even return in an individualized form.

The old life experiences are preserved and then they are added to when each new connection with a new physical form is made. Through this new connection the old life experiences can be augmented. This means that every human being is reborn with his or her old habits, experiences and skills. However, although this fact can be observed in even very small children, it takes around 30 years before the previous level of consciousness is reached. It is only through an uninterrupted evolution cycle that life can take on meaning. (Note: the reasons, why the majority of people are unaware of their previous existences are described in detail in the lesson about reincarnation. The possibility of remembering definitely exists; there is lot of evidence to support this.)

Any annihilation or even extinction of the life experiences gained would be pointless. Why all the suffering in life, why all the effort, why all the toil and trouble, if there was no possibility that all of this would make sense for a later life, where acquired skills would once again be used and enhanced? Herein lies the explanation for the ingenuity of some people, whose exceptional talent is not accidental, nor does it follow a particular race — but instead is the product of self-effort from previous existences. Talent is never inherited from parents, only the biological characteristics which form the predisposition for the appropriate bodily form which the genius requires.

When a plant dies, its life does not die; when a human being dies, his or her life does not die. It has only retreated into the world of subtle energy from whence it came – the physical cells have merely been used up. Sometimes a healthy living being's life is violently ended. Life itself is immortal because of the existence of an invisible divine force which first manifests itself individually in humans. This life force returns in the cycles of evolution in the sense of a refining process, a process with an unknown ending — such are the enormous opportunities that lie ahead.

b) Life as an expression of the divine joy of creation

Theology says: 'Life is expression of divine grace.' Metaphysics says: 'Life is an expression of divine joyful creation', not the gift of a divine whim or an arbitrariness, but a conscious act, which includes the underlying liability for an equitable balance.

For deity, life equates to joy, so therefore life should be joyous for all people Only then can we speak of 'justness' for everyone.

All life is a part of the divine life. There is no life without deity. The divine life pervades everything, mineral, plant, animal, human and superhuman intelligence. This conscious perception of the divine life within us takes place amongst those people, who have

initially begun the return journey home to the 'house of God the Father', meaning they have deliberately decided to continue their evolution to a superhuman intelligence.

*"Spirit and Matter are the two States of the **ONE**, which is neither Spirit nor Matter, both being the absolute life, latent." (Book of Dzyan, Comm. III., par. 18). . . . "Spirit is the first differentiation of (and in) **SPACE**; and Matter the first differentiation of Spirit. That, which is neither Spirit nor matter -- that is IT -- the Causeless **CAUSE** of Spirit and Matter, which are the Cause of Cosmos. And **THAT** we call the **ONE LIFE** or the Intra-Cosmic Breath."* (SD Vol.I)

2. Humankind: - where from? – what for? – where to?

Material science tells us that all life has developed from hydrocarbons and proteins, hence humanity. However, thus far no researcher has succeeded in creating a plant or an animal, let alone a human being, either from these coacervate droplets of hydrocarbons or from DNA molecules. It is possible however to synthetically produce almost all the organic substances from which plants and animals are structured.

The mystery, the occult, leaves science constantly embarrassed and science cannot escape. What exactly explains self-moving atoms, self-moving planets and suns?! What mighty powers (deities) these must be if they can effortlessly invest themselves with movement and life! What a genius the protozoon3 would be! What an impressive scholar the protoplasm would be if in its brain it had already determined to become human in the millions of years yet to come!

No scholar would argue that a horse is more intelligent than a human being or that a blade of grass is more intelligent than a cow; that in turn a mineral is wiser than the blade of grass and the atom wiser than the mineral. But they claim to know that the germinal of apes would be stored in a protozoon and by virtue of their own intelligence to climb down a tree as a human being, grasp a club and from there develops the most modern tools — right up to the automated factory.

Truly, such an assertion about the origins of life and the origin of man is not only absurd, but also the height of human narrow-mindedness, which simply refuses to recognise a higher divine principle and creative force which guides the world. This is the central focus. This divine principle does not fit into a certain philosophy of life for others and therefore it is deleted from textbooks and from material science — it just does not exist. Such a position is similar to the attempt to renounce your natural parents and to allege that it was through your own energy or through the guidance of nature that you exploded into the world out of an undifferentiated mass of atoms! In equal measure, it seems impossible to deny the divinity of immortal life and its origin.

Life does not begin initially with procreation and it does not end with death; life is always present and only looking for new forms of expression. It is not the physical human being which is the real man or woman, but instead it is the spirit which is energising it — without whose existence, life is impossible. It is not the human brain that is actually thinking, but the human spirit, which uses the brain as a tool in order to express his thinking in the physical world. The human spirit itself is only a part of the divine life that resides in every human being — not just in humans, but also in animals, in plants, in cells and even in atoms. In essence this is nothing more than the expression of a divine life, namely a pulsating heart in the microcosmic sense.

[3] microscopic, single-cell (protozoon) lowest strain of animal

The question 'where from?' should therefore be answered clearly in the sense of a divine 'procreation' (abiogenesis). Nothing is created solely by the laws of movement of matter. Each form requires a free creative mind and an innate divine power, whereby all manifestations form parts of a complete divine force.

The question 'what for?' results in a clear answer: life is a continual cleansing process, whose natural tool is enlivened nature — and humankind constitutes a certain segment in this entire evolutionary progression.

The end of this life development process is unforeseeable, but its direction also answers the question 'where to?', in the sense of a return to the source of divine consciousness after the human spirit has reached the highest level — it seems therefore that even this spiral course of eternal life comes to a certain kind of completion.

3. Physical life as a Maja (illusion)

Material science naturally perceives physical forms of life as the only reality and fact. For the scientific world, life after death or eternal life does not exist since this cannot be verified by means of measuring instruments and other investigative methods. It is not out of the bounds of reality that some of the scientific laboratories will succeed in the future in analysing subtle forms of life energy and thereby verifying the permanence of life itself.

At this point, the tables will then be turned and from a scientific point of view, life on earth will then be viewed as illusive because of its temporary and fleeting nature. Eternal life in the higher spheres will be then seen to have lasting value and therefore worthwhile.

The fleetingness and low significance of earthly life which rushes by, lends great clarity to an Indian legend taken from the book "Jnana Yoga' by Swami Vivekananda4.

'So are we all in this world, and the legend tells how once Narada said to Krishna, Lord, show me Maya.' A few days passed away, and Krishna asked Narada to make a trip with him towards a desert, and after walking for several miles Krishna said, 'Narada, I am thirsty; can you fetch some water to me?' I will go at once, master, and get you water.'

So Narada went. At a little distance from the place there was a village; he entered the village in search of some water, and knocked at a door, the door opened and a most beautiful young girl appeared. At the sight of her he immediately forgot that his master was waiting, thirsty, perhaps dying for want of water. He forgot everything, and began to talk with the girl. All that day he did not return to his master. The next day he was again at the house talking to the girl. That talk ripened into love, he asked the father for the daughter, and they were married, and lived there and had children. Thus twelve years passed. His father-in-law died, he inherited his property, and lived, as he seemed to think, a very happy life with his wife and children, his fields and his cattle, his lands and his house. Then came a flood. One night the river rose until it overflowed its banks and flooded the whole of the village. Houses began to fall, men and animals were swept away and drowned, and everything was floating in the rush of the stream. Narada had to escape. With one hand he had hold of his wife, with the other two of his children, another child was on his shoulders, and he was trying to ford this tremendous flood. After a few steps the current was too strong, and the child on his shoulders fell and was borne away. A cry of despair came from Narada. In trying to save that child he lost his grasp upon one of the others he was holding, and it also was lost. At last his wife, to whom he had clung with all his might and main to save her life, was also torn away by the

[4] Vivekananda, Vedanta Philosophy: Lectures on Jnana Yoga (1902); 12 January 1863 in Kolkata, † 4 July 1902 in Howrah, was a Hindu monk and scholar.

current, and weeping and wailing he was thrown on the bank, where he fell upon the ground with bitter lamentations.

Behind him there came a gentle voice: 'My child, where is the water? You went to fetch a pitcher of water, and I am waiting for you; you have been gone about half an hour.' 'Half an hour!' Twelve whole years had passed through his mind, and all these scenes had passed by in that half an hour and this is Maya.'

Through this example, the master was demonstrating the Maya concept to his disciple. That is to say, he demonstrated the illusiveness and the fleeting nature of earthly existence and its possessions. What Narada once experienced, many people experience today and will continue to experience in the future. Just as the current had left Narada within a few short minutes bereft of everything that he had so dearly loved and everything that had been close to his heart, so do other powerful currents rob men of their nearest and dearest and their property, causing much suffering and grief. It seems as if nature and all the elemental forces were allied against Narada from the moment he became attached to earthly possessions and considered earthly life as the only thing worth striving for.

Anyone who forgets the high spiritual values — which in truth are immortal — sooner or later must watch as their material enjoyments, which have been guarded as treasures, are stripped away. True reality is not earthly life, but the higher life of the spirit.

Meditation upon death

If the previous statements about the illusory and fleeting nature of earthly life are still not enough, meditating on death could be considered. One will then be able to recognize that the physical body is not the real 'I' or the 'Individual' but rather, the entire identity is merely a transient shell, a sort of organic gown which is then discarded, such as inorganic substances are when they have either been used or outworn.

In the hour of death, earthly possessions become illusions. How can money and jewels and other riches help the deceased? These are not needed in a four and multidimensional world. There are other values which count.

10 years after death, the once-beloved body has decomposed, the glory of youth has been erased, and the vigour of former life is broken. Nothing remains, only memories — and even these fade. No-one would believe any more that this physical body represents true life. There is a higher life that has left the body and this exists even after death.

4. Perplexity upon the threshold of death

For someone who lacks the certainty that life is everlasting, death must truly seem like a leap in the dark or into nothingness, and this must be a meaningless and horrible feeling. That is precisely why death compels people to consider the meaning of life. **Even a short life must have some kind of significance which is acceptable to most and its logic should be clear for everyone** – otherwise life would be one long injustice and life's creator merely a demon.

Death does not pursue a particular system in choosing its victims. Some only die when their physical bundle of cells has degenerated, others are carried off in the prime of their lives, sometimes even while working. It often takes just a slight illness in order to die. However, some survive even the most serious of afflictions. Many have been torn violently from life during war. The traffic accidents and the increase of terrorist attacks has revealed yet another battlefield of death without a system. If people die in the full bloom of their lives, in youth or even as infants, life would appear to have a certain futility if you don't understand the true

background. Some people wait for the death of their relatives in order to claim their inheritance. In such cases, life is generally full of distress and anguish. In turn, others die too early on and leave children and relatives to be looked after. But where does the balance lie between this diversity and apparent injustice?

Does death create a fair balance?

Does death create a fair balance? It cannot, and that is why so often the apparent injustice of God is lamented. Additionally, if death would be the absolute end, most people would take the position of bitterness and disappointment with those responsible for creating life. If it were not possible to give life a significance which would be acceptable to all people in the same way – for the poor and the rich, the sick and the healthy, this poetic justice would have) to be doubted.

But fact is – nothing is as certain in the universe as poetic justice. Yet it is impossible that within the brief period of a single life that this can have an impact, and therefore life must be viewed from the perspective of infinity which creates a balance from life to life. Then the seeker will no longer be helpless in front of the gate of death, but enter with a crown of wisdom, as the master of his destiny and existence.

5. The meaning of life - the question

The question of the meaning of life only emerges when its significance has become doubtful. For young people filled with optimism and who are hoping for a bright future, this doubt barely exists. The same also applies to young cultures and primitive people. The question arises primarily out of concern for daily survival and because of life's challenges. If the aspirations of youth do not come to fruition, the major disappointments and injustices of life are set in motion and one by one, expectations often have to be discarded — and the question then becomes passionate.

The contemplative human being looks for an acceptable meaning to life which is amenable to all of humanity. This has to exist and it does exist, although difficult to grasp.

What kind of meaning does life have for cripples, idiots and fools? What kind of meaning does it hold for the terminally ill, for the ailing and for the helpless elderly, who feel like a burden to themselves and others?

If you go through life with your eyes open, you will find more suffering and misery than happiness and social warmth. It is therefore not surprising that so many people are driven to despair and suicide.

Nonetheless, theologians speak of an 'All fair' and All-merciful God, but they have no explanation for the suffering, injustice and for the diversity of people. Their statement that suggests that God makes those HE loves suffer in order to test them is unacceptable, because this suggests that God has a sadistic nature and does not come close to an infinite goodness Father.

This is why we should not be surprised that very often, people who think critically and for whom this explanation is not satisfactory, are driven into the arms of atheism (godlessness). This is merely the result of religious ignorance on both sides because in truth, God has nothing to do directly with the shaping of human destiny. This happens according to the natural law of cause and effect, as described in greater detail in the writings on 'Karma'.

6. Science's response

Science has become very proud through its achievements and denies the existence of subtle spheres, recognizing only the visible physical world. For this reason, it cannot offer an

explanation about the essence of life and even less so, it cannot provide an accurate answer to the question of the meaning of life, since this depends on an elevated world and cannot be separated from it.

The genesis of the universe is generally explained as a random accumulation of particles of matter which for some reason were set in motion. The same is true for humankind itself, whose elements return to a general reservoir after death. Life is viewed as random and not repeatable. One is alive simply because one was born. Mechanical laws offer new randomness in order that the species 'Homo sapiens' does not become extinct.

Under such circumstances, humans obviously cannot have a soul, let alone an immortal one. If a certain spiritual life cannot be entirely refuted, then this is viewed merely as a function of the physical brain. This then succumbs to destruction upon the death of the body, through which man is then completely extinguished. Material science therefore claims that life after death cannot exist, because everything a human being is composed of has been destroyed by death.

Therefore the question automatically arises as to what would be the meaning to life under such circumstances? If everything is destroyed through death, then man must of course seek to make the most out of life. He should enjoy life to the fullest, he should follow his passions — and not worry about any harmful consequences.

Homo homini Lupus

Such a belief naturally leads to a collapse of moral values. Man is a wolf to man (homo homini lupus). Simply anything goes — one just should not get caught. As a result, all ethical barriers fall away. Negative qualities flourish in abundance, and the lowest of instincts and impulses are awakened. Man falls below the moral level of animals, as demonstrated by the daily murder cases and scandals. Vice, perversion and crimes are becoming rampant.

Laws had to be created in order to regulate the coexistence of this 'human society', just as traffic needs to be regulated. These legal barriers are really only required in order that people do not eliminate one another and to avoid chaos — materialistic people would no longer work because they could live off looting and/or deception.

So, these are the prospects of a world view which rejects any responsibility, because in its view there is no live after death and also no one and nothing who could take us to responsibility.

There is no-one as short-sighted as those materialists who neither think, nor observe. It escapes them completely that there is also a natural law of cause and effect which, sooner or later, inevitably calls everyone to account. Interestingly enough, some materialists often act more decently than they would have to, based upon their worldly view. This is a sign that even they have a conscience which intuitively allows them a glimpse of the great cosmic law of karma.

Thank God the entire scientific world is not as short sighted, especially the biologists, who have made remarkable progress through intensive observation and who have already gained phenomenal knowledge regarding the existence of invisible spiritual forces both in plants and in animals. Even the newly trained psychologists are increasingly distancing themselves from materialism, since they can also describe conscious processes with exact methods. These processes cannot simply be explained as electrical or other mechanical operations within the brain, but rather these must be regarded as signs of a significantly higher form of life. There are already approaches in motion in both physics and mathematics which are drawing closer to higher dimensions and to a subtle world.

7. Philosophy´s Response

In principle, philosophy and science have an equally positive outlook. Having said that, philosophy does not regard the individual human being as the purpose of life, but rather looks upon the whole of humankind as a group. It calls for an impending earthly paradise and for the earthly happiness of future generations, for which we people of today might simply be considered human fertilizer. This new ground will be prepared through our deeds, sufferings and deprivations.

There is probably a certain amount of wisdom and an existing ethical foundation in this outlook. Nonetheless, this explanation is far from being universally acceptable because it is not logical enough and not fair enough. In essence, it is completely materialistic and bestows barely discernable emotional satisfaction in the sense of family or racial politics as its significance lies solely in the future and not in the present.

Philosophy offers a challenging earthly paradise which we do not actually experience, since it is believed that everything ends with death. The logical and fair-minded human being wants assurances either in this life or in a later life, that his labours and efforts will bear fruit — and are not just for the benefit of future generations.

Philosophy by no means solves the mystery of our existence. It does not build a bridge between the fading and the everlasting. It does not view death as the end. It is hardly surprising that a total pessimism develops, of which the German philosopher Schopenhauer was a leading promoter. He came to the conclusion that our world must be the worst of the worlds because he did not succeed in delving deeper into the mysteries of our existence and recognizing the connections between cause and effect.

a) Ethical Rationalism

Philosophy of ethics and philosophy of value developed a special attitude of mind which may be described as 'ethical rationalism'. The 'world-historical' paragon is Socrates, who was not satisfied with finding the right thing here and there — he also wanted to know why he felt it was right. Nietzsche, his opponent, was also an ethical rationalist, albeit of a different mindset. However, they are both in concert when they say that life only has meaning if it is filled with certain values.

Life is conducted according to convenience. Motivations determine actions. Each activity undertaken with purposeful intent is meaningful. This in turn plays a subordinate role for a higher purpose. You cannot turn off this way of thinking of expediency. People who engage in aimless work live meaningless lives. Even the endurance of pain and suffering is tolerable if it can be understood as appropriate — perhaps as atonement for previous guilt or as a means of psychological reformation. Herein lies a certain end in itself, a certain ultimate purpose. In the end, only that which is deemed to be positive can ultimately be considered a final goal. A positive value then becomes a self-value.

According to ethical rationalism, the meaning of life lies in the quest for the realization of self-worth, which in turn has already been removed from the way of thinking of expediency.

b) Transcendental Determination

The meaning of life can come from individuals themselves, just as it can be approached from the outside. Human beings have a place in the universe and fulfil a purpose as an element of a greater whole. Since this hope may well prove to be deceptive even within the positivistic view (the system that bases knowledge on perception), the shift of focus remains open to the transcendent. However, this presupposes that the individual is not just the passive tool

of higher powers to simply be tossed into world affairs without knowledge or consent — but that one recognises this as significant and voluntarily assumes a subordinate role, finding oneself ready to cooperate.

Another indication that points to the transcendent is the observation that all visible cultural treasures have succumbed to decline — a paralyzing fear for all generations. What has been left behind from the cultures and creativity of past millennia? What do the precious few witnesses in stone and marble which were saved from total decline, represent?

What does political idealism demonstrate when it creates history and frequently becomes the cause of violent destruction of culture? It often turns out to be the impact of futile ambition and quest for power — qualities that only briefly simulate a meaning to life. But where are the enduring values and accomplishments of these political idealists and positivists? Would it have been better not to interfere in events of peoples? What services did the powerful politicians and generals render, especially during the 20th century? They brought about an era of horror!

Disappointed with the accomplishments of earthly life, the contemplative human goes in search of the true values which he hopes to find in the transcendental. Not only does he play a part in a greater worldly plan, but also in the plan of his own personal evolution and inner development, which presents itself as a constant state of self-worth. Human beings become divine warriors in the battle between good and evil, and also aspire to higher values in this process. This belief has already been eliminated from philosophical ethics and is part of Living Teaching, on which ethical rationalism can no longer comment.

Living Ethics does not shift the focus solely to the transcendental, for which only adepts (the initiated) can provide evidence. Rather, it guides people back to give a purposeful motivation or meaning to their own ego, because therein lies the divine centre from which we must proceed in order to achieve the transcendent touch with the divine consciousness.

8. Theology´s Response

The greatest confusion regarding life's problems has been caused by theology wrongly interpreting the real conception of religion through ecclesiastic teachings. These teachings do not serve humanity, but serve the power and financial greed of a priestly caste who mistakenly interpreted the true concept of religion. In this way, the Christian doctrine, for example, barely survived 300 years in its original purity. Over the centuries, a number of untruthful commentators either failed to understand or maliciously distorted the original teachings. Very often a contrary interpretation was put forth, differing from what Jesus may actually have said, according to knowledge of cosmic laws.

Originally a dynamic doctrine which affirmed evolutionary development and all its consequences, a static constraint theory became rigidified in certain dogmas. Unfortunately, this situation was supported by the fact that the Holy Scriptures are usually set in a concealed language of symbols. However, this proves necessary for all world religions, since religious teachings are not only intended for a generation and a century, but for millennia — and therefore a timeless symbolic language must be chosen that fits the states of awareness of many generations.

However, the disadvantage of this mode of presentation is the fact that it can easily be misunderstood and misconstrued. In this connection, a great deal of damage has been done by ignorant priests and church teachings. This is how religious doctrines are robbed of their original purity and become religious denominations, i.e. religious beliefs which are set by teachers of the church in the name of God.

Even the Bible states that one should not cast pearls before swine. This applies primarily to the pearls of wisdom in the primal world religions. The majority of human beings do

not know what to do with these pearls and would trample them into the dirt, if the true crux of the matter was not concealed by symbols. Certain mysteries had to be guarded by an appointed priesthood. Those who had this knowledge however were ousted from the ranks of priests and had to mingle with and find amongst the masses, the few genuine seekers to share the pearls of wisdom with.

The soul which is seeking and struggling for perfection will reveal the true meaning of the veiled secrets, albeit after frequently coming up against dead ends and failures. This is inevitable and can be understood as a sign of growth. The human being must become acquainted with making mistakes and must experience disappointment in order to strive tirelessly for the truth. In the end, the right solution and the correct path is found. True maliciousness begins only when someone knowingly and intentionally persists with falsehoods and defends that position as the truth — and conversely, describes the truth as a lie.

Such a confusion of truth with falsehood has developed in the Christian doctrine. In particular, the proposition of multiple repetitions of earthly life and personal development to divinity, was deleted from it.

a) Eternal bliss or eternal damnation?

Instead of progressive refinement up to the steps of divinity, which Jesus hinted at in the words, “Therefore you shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5/48), the theory of eternal damnation and eternal salvation for the deeds of a short earthly life was set. Of course, a person of reason will counter: “How can everyone attain a state of divinity, as we would then all be gods ourselves?” Unquestionably correct, since the heavenly father of whom Jesus spoke, is neither a finite state nor the highest state — but rather a planetary stage in evolution which is open to everyone.

What does eternity mean? Not one million years, not one billion years, not one trillion or quintillion! Eternity means time without end. So what is one short life compared to eternity? Merely a fleeting moment! And now a human being should be eternally damned for one — in the sense of Christian theology — wasted life? In fact, there is even the possibility that if someone dies in a state of grave sin, which could happen virtually within a few seconds, he or she is eternally damned because he or she had an unlucky moment where a brick fell on his head without giving him an opportunity to confess, nor the necessary time to awaken repentance — transported at lightning speed to the afterlife! How many people die suddenly through accident, a heart attack, stroke or other fatal malfunctions?

The theory of eternal damnation is therefore utterly unacceptable, as will be illustrated later. Theology itself has seen this gap in logic and has therefore very cleverly devised the ecclesiastical means of grace, especially the remission of sins, the indulgence and thus the key authority of heaven and hell itself. Only those who are serving this priestly means of grace are considered to obtain eternal salvation. This notion not only contradicts the true facts, but is presumptuous and blasphemous beyond compare.

b) Birth as an absolute beginning

According to theologians, the spiritual soul is only created at the moment of conception in this life. This absolute inception of life with procreation in the present life would be highly unjust. However, there is no cosmic injustice and thus the beginning of the spiritual soul does not lie in begetting. This lies much further back, possibly at a time when all human beings started at the same point of origin, and human life on the planet began millions of years ago.

Individuals are characterized at birth through such uniqueness that to consider that life began with the last procreation must indeed be regarded as a great injustice. There are clever and intelligent children, but also completely untalented ones.

Why, for example, are some children born to rich parents and others to poor? For what reasons are some people more or less healthy and yet others are already sick from birth onwards? Why are some beautiful and others ugly, some white, others black? Yes, we can safely say that this diversity is so great that there are no two same people in the world with the same point of origin or the same abilities and talents. That is why birth, or procreation, is not an absolute beginning, but instead a new phase of development in a chain of life which will continue. A balancing takes place in the lives to come through appropriate efforts.

c) Resurrection of the flesh

The idea that death is the end of life, and thereby eternal salvation or eternal damnation is linked to it, is wrong. The truth about the resurrection of the flesh has been completely misinterpreted by the theologians.

The Apostles Creed of the Catholic Church states: “I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.” The resurrection, however, should only take place at the Last Judgment. Both are religious life problems that have been misunderstood and misinterpreted by misguided theologians. The resurrection of the body does not suggest that people at a particular point in time will gather their bones from the graves — which by then no longer exist — but must be seen as an indication of a rebirth of the law of nature.

Therefore the Apostles’ Creed should really say: “I believe in the repeating resurrection in a body and in an eternal life.” The “last judgment” itself is a certain stage in the development of a root race, the end of an old and the transition to a new, where the respective world teacher chooses his ‘sheep’ who are suitable for advancement to the new root race, and also elects those who must be left behind as they have not passed the tests of life. Moreover, this is also indicated in the Christian Bible, where the separation of the wheat from the chaff is talked about. This does not mean that the others who have not been chosen are eternally damned — they will just repeat, i.e. repeat a specific section of their development.

A real resurrection of the discarded flesh (the old body) is impossible and secondly, it is absurd and unjust. Human beings have different bodies for every world and thus would not be able to do anything with a gross body in the subtle world. Even Jesus at His resurrection left His gross body behind and the physical atoms were then dissolved or transformed. Each ‘shell’ must be returned to the sphere from whence it was taken.

In their hatred of other faiths and with the intention of exerting pressure upon those of a different faith, Christian theologians claimed the right to resurrection for themselves by only extending this to their believers and excluding all those who did not believe in Christ. The same intolerance was also displayed by many Jehovah’s Witnesses, through restricting the right of resurrection to a certain elect group. Anyone who does not believe in Christ should be eternally damned or at least remain in purgatory until judgement day. But how could an infinitely merciful and benevolent God condemn a man who knew nothing of Christ and lived according to the teachings of another master, perhaps even more respectably than a Christian lived? We are all children of God and as such are equally vested, regardless of whether we are Christians or so-called pagans.

The key for the salvation lie elsewhere. They are never in the hands of those theologians who have compelled people to follow through their suggestive images — instead, they lie within the hearts of every human beings. For those who strive for perfection, the door to the highest worlds will be opened.

The meaning of life can only be realised when conditions are the same for everyone. This awareness will only come into focus after a greater period of time has elapsed where no special privileges exist and where productivity and deeds of the individual are balanced. This reality will then be acceptable to all people, because it is the only fair reality.

9. The response of the living ethics

a) Pre- and post-existence of the soul

Three ideas about the meaning of life have been illustrated. The first, which comes from the ranks of positivist science, does not recognize either a pre-existence, or a post-existence of the soul (the soul's existence before procreation and after death). The belief is that everything ends with death. Hence the motto: enjoy life! However, this notion is illogical, irrational and extremely unjust because there is a law of the diverse which must exist, otherwise life in human society would not be possible. Not everyone can be a doctor or pharmacist. The repeal of this law of diversity, together with the repeal of moral laws would also lead to chaos. Seen from a long-term point of view, there is an absolute and poetic justice in the universe. Therefore the positivist view of the world is naturally refuted.

The second idea comes from the philosophy. This does not recognize pre-existence and as a result of the law of diversity, one must therefore come to the conclusion that this world is unjust and subsequently only bad. For this reason, its creator must also be accused of malevolence. The post-existence of the soul is partially recognized by philosophy; if nothing else, in the form of a sort of transmigration of the soul. Even to a philosopher, it must seem incomprehensible that all the efforts and sufferings of life should have been in vain.

As a third category, the belief of Christian theologians does not recognise pre-existence and tries to compensate for the injustices of life by ecclesiastical means of grace. They do accept the post-existence of the soul, but not in the form of an evolutionary development — only as a static consistent state in a heaven or a hell. This concept is also illogical, unjust and therefore unacceptable. Furthermore, it contradicts the original teachings of Christ.

The fourth form of belief recognizes both the pre-existence as well as the post-existence of the soul, namely in the sense of an evolutionary and unlimited development. It offers the only chance of a fair balancing to compensate for the diversity of life and is taught by both Christ and Buddha, in addition to being taught by the master of Living Ethics. Since every human being is given limitless possibilities on account of their own efforts, all diversities are justifiably treated fairly and consequently this is acceptable to all people.

b) Life as a perpetual movement towards perfection

Life itself is eternal and the life of human beings on earth is only a short chapter in the chain of cosmic life. **Each life forms a link within the context of a complete human evolution. Evolution however, is based upon perfection and thus is the essence of the meaning of life. Eternally moving forward, either for self-improvement or for development to divinity.** This is why the master of Living Ethics, MORYA, says: *"... Perfect yourselves, my friends, unwearyingly. ..."* (The Call, 1921 - V - 29)

The same was expressed by Jesus Christ through his teachings for the pursuit of divine perfection. However, this is simply impossible to attain it in one single lifetime, nor can it be accomplished in a static heaven. Numerous rebirths are necessary because otherwise the karma created in life could not be redeemed.

Perfection is the result of continual endeavours. The divine state which Christ already achieved is the result of a tireless quest for perfection. But even at this level, there is no end — the end is incalculable. In the universe there are no limitations to anything or from anywhere and therefore there is no absolute limit to the level of perfection. This continues in the direction of infinity.

The same magnificence is available to everyone, and the injustices of our present life fade in the light of expectation and of fair recompense, which takes place from life to life. Therefore, life is not a proverbial pit from which a person can not get out without ecclesiastical means of grace, but rather it is part of a legitimate and methodical movement of evolution.

We provide for the common good, we serve general welfare — thereby serving ourselves. It must be designed like this in the universe otherwise there would be no incentive for the pursuit of perfection. **Perfection is never just a personal matter, but an oeuvre of the community and mutual endeavour for the community. Everyone who strives for perfection draws others with them, thereby raising the collective level.**

c) The transmutation of matter in sprit

Within the context of evolution, humanity has been assigned a special task, namely to be the link between mind and matter. Spirit is matter with the highest vibration frequencies — matter, however, is spirit with the lowest vibration frequencies. Spirit is not an abstract concept, but rather a higher manifestation of matter. Something abstract would not be subject to change or capable of development and would therefore have no opportunity to affect matter. Spirit however, transforms and animates matter, therefore resulting in perpetual motion. The task of humankind is to be the transformer and to perform a cleansing process through its work on earth.

d) The transmutation of lower characteristics in higher

Each form has a certain character and the more this is refined, the more beautiful and purely it can be expressed. Therefore humans must also modify their characteristics in pursuit of perfection. They must convert the so-called lower or animal characteristics, to higher ones. Again, this purification process cannot be accomplished within a single life — it extends over hundreds of rebirths, depending upon the endeavours undertaken.

Spiritually, perfection means the refinement of character. Hence, character development is nothing other than the transformation of lower characteristics to higher ones i.e. the development of more love, thoughtfulness, decency, generosity, thereby transforming negative characteristics into positive ones. For this reason, a higher being will only impact people through love and never through violence. No God may or would intervene with force in the destiny of humankind, but serves only through the power of a greater love.

After all, in nature everything lives from the power of love. It begins with motherly love and goes right up to the highest form of grace. From a cosmic point of view, love means warmth and light. Only love can overcome spiritual darkness. It is a natural law that light always triumphs over darkness, just as day triumphs over night. If it were constantly day however, people would not deem light necessary. Therefore it also has to be dark and cold for the reason that life is only possible through bipolarity. Only those who have walked through the depths of imperfection can strive for perfection.

e) Pursuit of perfection

In past centuries, people who strove for perfection fled from the imperfection of life into the mountains, forests and deserts, and finally to the monasteries. Nowadays, something different is demanded from people. They must bring perfection into life without escaping from

the ups and downs of life. That is why the view which states that yoga demands its disciples to withdraw from life is mistaken. The new era demands a new response to the questions of life and the perfection. In solitude, only personal perfection can be achieved. In the age of community and cooperation, the striving for perfection must come from the ups and downs of life and you should remain within your social surroundings and strive to improve it.

Who does not want to live a futile and useless life, has no other alternative than spiritual refinement. Therefore one has to recognize the higher meaning of life. The main purpose of life is to live meaningfully and wisely, profoundly influencing those around you while leaving behind a positive legacy for generations to come. It does not lie in the earthly satisfaction of one's needs with all its known forms of triviality.

10 Quotes from Agni Yoga

"Every illusion can be made real, for it carries a seed of reality that can be enhanced and revealed. Illusions should be regarded as fireflies. Who would want to extinguish something that brings light? Know how to smite the darkness of hypocrisy, but let each petal of sincerity live." (AY § 252)

"Even when facing the greatest battle, we must continue to follow our usual daily plan. It would not be correct for a battle to disrupt the current of life. Battle is our destiny, and one must simply include it in the daily plan." (AY § 179)

"Life rushes by like a waterfall, but not many perceive its motion. Those who yearn for rest regard life as if it were a tomb. What is rest? This concept is an invention of the dark ones. What manifest timidity people reveal when they speak of rest! For them, rest is idleness. This kind of rest is always an earth-bound joy, a joy of doing nothing that is not Ours. Is nature ever idle? We, as parts of nature, are subject to its laws. One does not always have to be running. Nor need one choose for himself a life of seclusion. Even a plant, for example, though rooted, exists in a state of constant activity." (AY § 268)

"Can one ascend and descend in isolation? Truly, no being can act without affecting his surroundings. Not only does he stir up the various layers of the atmosphere with each action but he literally drags his near ones with him. Man must realize his responsibility toward the universe. A person, with each elevation of the spirit, is of substantial aid to others. But a person falling in spirit may thereby even kill someone. Beyond the range of one's conscious thought flows a constant unconscious interaction, embracing wide circles, limited by the law of karma and the affinity of auras.

It is not always easy to decide when one is a murderer and when a benefactor. Only as beacons of Agni Yoga can we with justice illumine the workings of chaotic thought. But for this we must consecrate ourselves in sacrifice to Agni Yoga; and few can love the dangers of self-sacrifice. Therefore, what is said is comprehensible to only a few. But one can cite numerous examples, such as how one who became insane in Asia was the cause of the death of another in Europe, or how one who rose in spirit in America healed another in Egypt. Hence the efflorescence of beneficent thoughts is a flaming flower of spirit." (AY § 168)

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List of references:

Works of the blessed MAITREYA MORYA:

Blossoms of Morya`s Garden:

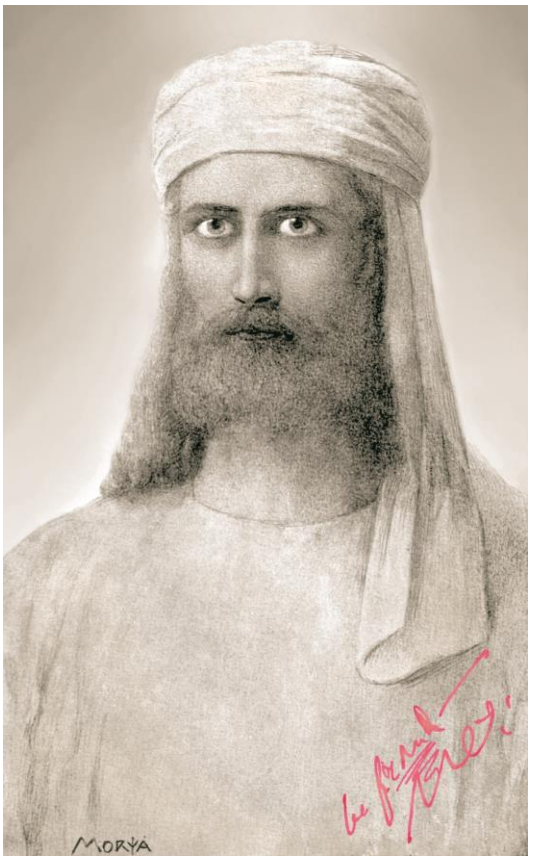
CALL	CALL	§§ 387
ILLUMINATION	ILL	§§ 358

New era:

COMMUNITY	COM	§§ 275

Doctrine of Living Ethics in seven themes:

AGNI YOGA	AY	§§ 670
INFINITY (2 parts)	INF	§§ 918
HIERARCHY	HIE	§§ 460
HEART	HEA	§§ 600
FIERY WORLD I	FW I	§§ 666
FIERY WORLD II	FW II	§§ 470
FIERY WORLD III	FW III	§§ 618
AUM	AUM	§§ 600
BROTHERHOOD	BH	§§ 610
SUPERMUNDANE	SMU	§§ 955



MORYA – Indian Rajput prince, whose spirit had enraptured to the great spirit of the MAITREYA, become enlightened and overshadowed by this. This ordered portrait drawing of the artist Hermann Schmiechen in 1884 was often copied, however the copies are only similar to the "face of the teacher", so repainted copies lead to failures in meditations!

Build a “Star”

Many responsible-minded and worried people today demand a practical action that promises maximum success without attracting much attention, without affiliation to a club or without political risk. In this way they live up to positive expression to their sense of responsibility towards the world situation. Working on the "Star" helps to alleviate not only spiritual but also material distress. It is therefore important to be concerned, at least a few times a day, sending out good thoughts, not for oneself, but above all for the world and for peace. Then the general mental work will also become accustomed to selfless aspirations, and there will be the hope that through such concentrated powers of thoughts the power of evil can be successfully reduced and averted. If millions of people voluntarily made themselves available to such a work, those men and women who would be fit for their purified thinking and noble character, could be able to protrude without great difficulty in religion, politics and social life in order to establish a fair and peaceful world order for the benefit of all people.

„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“

Source of light in the universe,
pour out light into human thinking,
it become brighter on Earth!

Source of love in the universe,
pour out love into all human hearts,
May love blossom on Earth!

Source of wisdom in the universe,
pour out knowledge and wisdom,
let cognition prevail on Earth!

Source of peace in the universe,
strength peace and justice,
may felicity and joy be on Earth!

Source of power in the universe,
seal the door to evil,
that the plan of the good will be fulfilled!

„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“

(For further information see Lesson no. 6).

LEOBRAND – Leopold Brandstätter (* 20th February 1915 Wallern, † 26th February 1968 Linz), was an Austrian nature philosopher and humanist.
His writings are concerned with ethics, humanities, psychology, philosophy, politics, ideology of the world and architecture.
In the 1950s he translated the Agni yoga doctrine from Russian together with a Baltic-German team, thus paving the way for this philosophy in German-speaking countries.
Leobrand founded a (non public) school for Living Ethics. Decades before the introduction of teaching ethics in public schools he had already written 36 lessons of Living Ethics, as the first interdenominational teaching aid for ethical training. He gave countless lectures and conducted seminars. Recordings of Leobrand‘s lectures are available. These historical audio documents offer the possibility to understand/think along the philosophical analysis of the great thinker Leobrand and open up new horizons for life´s spiritual dimension. Philosophical accuracy and clarity of expression are Leobrand‘s trademarks.
The new concept of God is particularly noteworthy. For this new and completely independent concept of God, a new term was created: "UNIVERALO“. Leobrand‘s concept is explained on a hierarchical basis, it detaches itself from the abstract and merges with the whole existence. It includes many philosophical and historical concepts as well as advanced knowledge of relatively immortal spiritual fields of force. Leobrand therewith expressed the first and only humanistic definition of God within a new world-view and pulls the rug from under atheism. The new concept of God is as dynamic as nature itself and thus indicative of the forthcoming independent humanities.
Other highlights are his work for a united Europe and for a forthcoming pannational world union. Many of those great-sounding ideas of Leobrand are already self-evident reality.

Works:

1955 - 1961: 36 lessions, **Briefe über Lebendige Ethik** (*letters on Living Ethics* **-** in translation)
1957: **Psychische Energie** (*Psychic energy* - humanities and psychologie)
1958: **Heilung durch psychische Energie** (*Healing by psychic energy* - humanities and health)
1966: **Freude** (*Joy* - philosophy)
1967: **Der Ausweg** (*The way out* - politics)
1968: **Neues Europa und Welt ABC** (*New europe and world ABC* - politics)
1968: **Das neue universelle Weltbild** (*The new universal world view* - world view)
1968: **Spiralik** (*Spiralik* - architecture of the future)
1953 - 1968: reprint, articles in magazines (partly unpublished manuscripts)
1976: **Der auferstandene Gott** (*The resurrected god* - humanities, compilation of articles)
1962 - 1967: **Lectures** and seminars on all his works (recordings MC in German language)

Activities:

1949: Establishment of a **peace league**
1953: Establishment of the (not public) „**School for Living Ethics**“ and magazine
1960: Publication of the magazine „ **Spirale und grüne Wacht**“ (nature protection and biotechnology)
1961: Publication of the magazine „ **Weltreichspirale**”
1962: Establishment of the association „ **Welt-Spirale**“ - ethical society of progress and renewal of the world, and magazine.

© 1955, Leopold Brandstätter, the first edition was published in German by „Schule für Lebendige Ethik“ Verlag für Lebendige Ethik, Linz, Austria. Translation from German: 2019 Welt-Spirale, Ethische Gesellschaft für Fortschritt und Welterneuerung, Linz Austria. weltspirale@aon.at, www.Welt-Spirale.com, Correction status 2026/02/24 Electronic Edition. Gratuitously distribution of data carriers and printouts of this electronic edition are permitted.

Joy – Peace – Freedom

Serve peace and welfare of the world!

Overview of the „letters on living ethics, Introduction to Agni yoga“ from LEOBRAND:

Basic information ethics

1. The truth about yoga
2. Problems of spiritual renewal
3. **The meaning of life**
4. Karma and forming of fate
5. Might and meaning of thoughts
6. Self-help through proper thinking
7. Reincarnation – yes or no?
8. The meaning of suffering
9. Absolution or personal responsibility?
10. Dharma and life-task
11. Death and Rebirth
12. Devotions and sacrifice
13. The relationship of the sexes
14. Marital problems
15. Living Ethics and education
16. Living Ethics and everyday life
17. Living Ethics and nutrition
18. Living Ethics and art

Spiritual training

19. Living Ethics – doctrine of life
20. Chakras or centers of higher consciousness
21. The spiritual meaning of the heart
22. The widening of consciousness
23. The subtle constitution of man
24. Monad or spiritual grain
25. The construction of the universe and Cosmoses
26. Subtle world
27. Fiery world
28. Brotherhood
29. The universal understanding of God
30. The Mother of the world
31. Occultism – yes or no?
32. Danger and meanders of occultism
33. Good and evil
34. The coming new world
35. Infinity
36. The path to become a master

Each life forms a link within the context of a complete human evolution. Evolution how-ever, is based upon perfection and thus is the essence of the meaning of life. This purification process cannot be accomplished within a single life — it extends over hundreds of rebirths, depending upon the endeavours undertaken. Spiritually, perfection means the refinement of character. Hence, character development is nothing other than the transformation of lower characteristics to higher ones i.e. the development of more love, thoughtfulness, decency, generosity, thereby transforming negative characteristics into positive ones. The main purpose of life is to live meaningfully and wisely, profoundly influencing those around you while leaving behind a positive legacy for generations to come. It does not lie in the earthly satisfaction of one's needs with all its known forms of triviality.

„Welt-Spirale"
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Ethical society for progress and world renewal