

starting point, it would seem that to whatever extent a doctrine encourages a sense of disunity, even at the level of thought, that doctrine is violating the fundamental meaning and purpose of religion.

In the same article, H.P.B. refers to Thomas Carlyle, the 18th-century Scottish writer who described the Protestant religion of his day as a kind of “working for divine wages.” That comment aptly characterises a dominant theme of much contemporary religiosity. He called Protestantism “a prudential feeling, grounded on mere calculation, a matter of expediency and utility . . . whereby some smaller quantum of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger quantum of celestial enjoyment.” The widely held dogma that a new soul is created with each human birth and that the eternal destiny of that soul is determined by the actions of a single life may help to foster religious self-interest. According to H. P. Blavatsky, such dubious metaphysical assumptions undermine a sense of responsibility for our circumstances and pervert our ideas of right and wrong while justifying selfishness instead of encouraging true morality. She quotes James Miller, the 18th-century English playwright’s description of religion: “true Religion is always mild, propitious and humble; Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood, Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels; But stoops to polish, succour and redress, And builds her grandeur on the public good.”

This, said H. P. Blavatsky, is what true Theosophy is or ought to be: “the service of humanity” and “the alleviation of human suffering in all its forms, but especially the mental and spiritual.” It is a search for the universally true and good, not so that we may advance, but so that we may properly accompany and guide others — not just our friends and those who are kind to us, but also our so-called enemies, those who hate and revile us, and especially the outcast and the forgotten. Theosophical teaching unconditionally affirms our responsibility for all humanity and all of nature. It offers sublime morality articulated in the Sermon on the Mount, which is not merely the truly Christian way, but a universal code of ethics preached also by Buddha, Confucius, Krishna, and a long line of great Sages reaching back thousands of years before the time of Christ, as well as by true teachers of humanity ever since.

Theosophy offers no new dogma or creed and purports to bring no new revelations. Rather, it attempts to uncover the timeless truths underlying