

teaching of the Heart is esoteric wisdom about what is of permanent value and enduring. “Heart” here does not mean emotion or feeling or affection, but rather inner gnosis, the embodiment or expression of bodhi, which HPB notes is “true, divine Wisdom.”

Verses 129 and 130 consider the paradox of the stillness at the center of the storm as a resolution of the dichotomy between action and inaction. A hurricane is an extraordinarily strong and violent wind with rain and often associated tornados and floods from the waves of the sea encroaching on the land. But at the eye or center of the hurricane is a spot of stillness and calm. Those who have experienced a hurricane passing directly over them will know what that means. At the beginning of the hurricane, often several days ahead, the sky becomes gray and lowering; then the winds pick up and eventually become very strong and destructive, as the sky turns black. The weakest hurricane has winds of 74 miles an hour, and most are considerably stronger, often more than 100 miles an hour. When the eye of the hurricane passes over, suddenly all winds cease, there is a calmness that is an amazing contrast with the previous violence, and the sky is clear blue with the sun shining. Then the winds return, from the opposite direction and the storm continues. This phenomenon is due to the fact that a hurricane is an enormously large circular wind raging around a clear center.

Our life is like the wind of the hurricane. At its center, there is a place of calm and peace. With meteorological hurricanes, we can only wait for the storm to pass over us. With the hurricanes of our inner life, we can place ourselves at the eye of the storm, where all is clear, calm, and quiet. Surendra Narayan has an insightful exposition of this topic in “On the Watch-Tower,” *Theosophist* 128.10 (July 2007): 363-5.

Verses 129 and 130 offer three metaphors for this state of mind: (1) A lamp needs to have its wick trimmed and its oil needs to be cleaned if the lamp is to burn well; the flame (our inner consciousness) does not feel the trimming or cleaning, which are “violent” acts in the outward form. (2) A tree may have its branches shaken violently in a storm, but its trunk, its central core, is unmoved. (3) A lake may have its surface agitated by waves from a storm, but beneath the surface, it is still and tranquil. All of these metaphors are talking about a tranquil inner consciousness even when outer agitation disturbs the body.