

Spirituality & Community

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www.spiritualityandcommunity.com



The Masnavi Rumi Sufism

The Present
Michael

Optimism- The Lesson of Ages
Benjamin Paul Blood

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Who We Are

www.spiritualityandcommunity.com

Welcome! Seeking spiritual fulfillment? True happiness and mental wellness? Well, that's what we're all about. Spirituality & Community is a magazine, web site, and online community for those seeking answers to life's deepest questions. ***We are dedicated to promoting spirituality, true happiness, mental wellness, and appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.***

A New Age of Light

Our focus is spirituality, which we view as an inner search for happiness and fulfillment. We are concerned with what lies within the heart. ***We believe that within everyone lies a pure love that we call the Light or the Lord within. We believe that one must open one's heart to the Light to attain spiritual fulfillment and that only this brings true happiness and mental wellness.*** The Light is the essence of humanity. ***Ultimately, we find our way by casting our gaze inward.*** We will search this inner world over until we find our home:

***We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding***

We believe that mankind is entering a new age, an Age of Light. We see a growing spiritual crisis in the world today. Our culture has brought us unprecedented material well being, but we seem further away than ever from true spiritual wholeness. We also perceive an increase in mental health issues in our society and believe this to be linked to spiritual detachment. Many wander endlessly in search of the material gratification that will bring them happiness. Many have lost faith in religions and traditions. Others sincerely believe in traditional religions but remain unfulfilled spiritually and unhappy. Unfortunately, too many are so close-minded they refuse to ask what is missing from their lives. Yet, many hunger for spiritual wholeness and are searching for answers. ***We believe that we are entering a new age of enlightenment in which genuine spiritual progress will be made and that spiritual development depends upon a genuine appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.*** An appreciation for diversity of belief provides us with a fresh view of the beliefs of others, allows us to take from each set of beliefs that which rings true, and enables us to synthesize a personal spirituality that makes sense for each of us. When we view the beliefs of others with our hearts, we see truth shine through. We look with the highest regard to traditional beliefs and religions for guidance, and we also look forward. ***We believe that the past is not the end but the beginning.***



What We Do

Spirituality & Community produces a magazine and encompasses an online community. Both aspects serve as the basis for bringing together those who share our aspirations and beliefs, to meet each other and exchange ideas. We provide many opportunities for exploring spirituality and communicating with others:

- Spirituality & Community magazine*
- Features on the site*
- Online chats* (as interest arises)

The magazine is based on a Reader's Digest® type model. It is comprised primarily of reader submitted material. It is the primary mechanism for a member to both explore spirituality and communicate his or her ideas to others. Features are also posted on the site. When interest is sufficiently high, we will hold chats online. *We sincerely hope that you will find truth within, and we wish you only the best on your own personal journey!*

The Masnavi

(excerpts)

by Maulana Jalalu-'d-din Muhammad Rumi

Translated by E.H. Whinfield (1898)

Sufism

Sufism is a mystical form of Islam. The primary focus of the Sufi revolves around looking inward to purify the heart and develop a powerful love of God. The Sufi thereby seeks to experience a personal union with God in this life. Rumi (1207-1273) is one of the best known Sufi poets in the west. He was a 13th century Persian scholar. For more, see: www.sacred-texts.com/isl/masnavi/index.htm.



Rumi's tomb (Mevlana museum)

Book I Prologue

HEARKEN to the reed-flute, how it complains,
Lamenting its banishment from its home:
"Ever since they tore me from my osier bed,
My plaintive notes have moved men and women to tears.
I burst my breast, striving to give vent to sighs,
And to express the pangs of my yearning for my home.
He who abides far away from his home
Is ever longing for the day he shall return.
My wailing is heard in every throng,
In concert with them that rejoice and them that weep.
Each interprets my notes in harmony with his own feelings,
But not one fathoms the secrets of my heart.
My secrets are not alien from my plaintive notes,
Yet they are not manifest to the sensual eye and ear.
Body is not veiled from soul, neither soul from body,
Yet no man hath ever seen a soul."
This plaint of the flute is fire, not mere air.
Let him who lacks this fire be accounted dead!
'Tis the fire of love that inspires the flute,
'Tis the ferment of love that possesses the wine.
The flute is the confidant of all unhappy lovers;
Yea, its strains lay bare my inmost secrets.
Who hath seen a poison and an antidote like the flute?
Who hath seen a sympathetic consoler like the flute?

The flute tells the tale of love's bloodstained path,
It recounts the story of Majnun's love toils.
None is privy to these feelings save one distracted,
As ear inclines to the whispers of the tongue.
Through grief my days are as labor and sorrow,
My days move on, hand in hand with anguish.
Yet,, though my days vanish thus, 'tis no matter,
Do thou abide, O Incomparable Pure One!
But all who are not fishes are soon tired of water;
And they who lack daily bread find the day very long;
So the "Raw" comprehend not the state of the "Ripe;"
Therefore it behoves me to shorten my discourse.
Arise, O son! burst thy bonds and be free!
How long wilt thou be captive to silver and gold?
Though thou pour the ocean into thy pitcher,
It can hold no more than one day's store.
The pitcher of the desire of the covetous never fills,
The oyster-shell fills not with pearls till it is content;
Only he whose garment is rent by the violence of love
Is wholly pure from covetousness and sin.
Hail to thee, then, O LOVE, sweet madness!
Thou who healest all our infirmities!
Who art the physician of our pride and self-conceit!
Who art our Plato and our Galen!
Love exalts our earthly bodies to heaven,
And makes the very hills to dance with joy!
O Iover, 'twas love that gave life to Mount Sinai,
When "it quaked, and Moses fell down in a swoon."
Did my Beloved only touch me with his lips,
I too, like the flute, would burst out in melody.
But he who is parted from them that speak his tongue,
Though he possess a hundred voices, is perforce dumb.
When the rose has faded and the garden is withered,
The song of the nightingale is no longer to be heard.
The BELOVED is all in all, the lover only veils Him;
The BELOVED is all that lives, the lover a dead thing.
When the lover feels no longer LOVE's quickening,
He becomes like a bird who has lost its wings. Alas!
How can I retain my senses about me,
When the BELOVED shows not the light of His countenance?
LOVE desires that this secret should be revealed,
For if a mirror reflects not, of what use is it?
Knowest thou why thy mirror reflects not?
Because the rust has not been scoured from its face.

If it were purified from all rust and defilement,
It would reflect the shining of the SUN Of GOD.
O friends, ye have now heard this tale,
Which sets forth the very essence of my case.

Story I

The Prince and the Handmaid

A prince, while engaged on a hunting excursion, espied a fair maiden, and by promises of gold induced her to accompany him. After a time she fell sick, and the prince had her tended by divers physicians. As, however, they all omitted to say, "God willing, we will cure her," their treatment was of no avail. So the prince offered prayer, and in answer thereto a physician was sent from heaven. He at once condemned his predecessors' view of the case, and by a very skilful diagnosis, discovered that the real cause of the maiden's illness was her love for a certain goldsmith of Samarcand. In accordance with the physician's advice, the prince sent to Samarcand and fetched the goldsmith, and married him to the lovesick maiden, and for six months the pair lived together in the utmost harmony and happiness. At the end of that period the physician, by divine command, gave the goldsmith a poisonous draught, which caused his strength and beauty to decay, and he then lost favour with the maiden, and she was reunited to the king. This Divine command was precisely similar to God's command to Abraham to slay his son Ishmael, and to the act of the angel in slaying the servant of Moses, and is therefore beyond human criticism.

Description of Love.

A true lover is proved such by his pain of heart;

No sickness is there like sickness of heart.

The lover's ailment is different from all ailments;

Love is the astrolabe of God's mysteries.

A lover may hanker after this love or that love,

But at the last he is drawn to the KING of love.

However much we describe and explain love,

When we fall in love we are ashamed of our words.

Explanation by the tongue makes most things clear,

But love unexplained is clearer.

When pen hastened to write,

On reaching the subject of love it split in twain.

When the discourse touched on the matter of love,

Pen was broken and paper torn.

In explaining it Reason sticks fast, as an ass in mire;

Naught but Love itself can explain love and lovers!

None but the sun can display the sun,

If you would see it displayed, turn not away from it.

Shadows, indeed, may indicate the sun's presence,

But only the sun displays the light of life.

Shadows induce slumber, like evening talks,

But when the sun arises the "moon is split asunder."

In the world there is naught so wondrous as the sun,

But the Sun of the soul sets not and has no yesterday.
Though the material sun is unique and single,
We can conceive similar suns like to it.
But the Sun of the soul, beyond this firmament,
No like thereof is seen in concrete or abstract.
Where is there room in conception for His essence,
So that similitudes of HIM should be conceivable?
Shamsu-'d-Din of Tabriz importunes Jalalu-'d-Din
to compose the Masnavi.
The sun (Shams) of Tabriz is a perfect light,
A sun, yea, one of the beams of God!
When the praise was heard of the "Sun of Tabriz,"
The sun of the fourth heaven bowed its head.
Now that I have mentioned his name, it is but right
To set forth some indications of his beneficence.
That precious Soul caught my skirt,
Smelling the perfume of the garment of Yusuf;
And said, "For the sake of our ancient friendship,
Tell forth a hint of those sweet states of ecstasy,
That earth and heaven may be rejoiced,
And also Reason and Spirit, a hundredfold."
I said, "O thou who art far from 'The Friend,'
Like a sick man who has strayed from his physician,
Importune me not, for I am beside myself;
My understanding is gone, I cannot sing praises.
Whatsoever one says, whose reason is thus astray,
Let him not boast; his efforts are useless.
Whatever he says is not to the point,
And is clearly inapt and wide of the mark.
What can I say when not a nerve of mine is sensible?
Can I explain 'The Friend' to one to whom He is no Friend?
Verily my singing His praise were dispraise,
For 'twould prove me existent, and existence is error.
Can I describe my separation and my bleeding heart?
Nay, put off this matter till another season."
He said, "Feed me, for I am an hungered,
And at once, for 'the time is a sharp sword.'
O comrade, the Sufi is 'the son of time present.'
It is not the rule of his canon to say, 'To-morrow.'
Can it be that thou art not a true Sufi?
Ready money is lost by giving credit."
I said, "'Tis best to veil the secrets of 'The Friend.'
So give good heed to the morals of these stories.
That is better than that the secrets of 'The Friend'
Should be noised abroad in the talk of strangers."
He said, "Without veil or covering or deception,

Speak out, and vex me not, O man of many words!
Strip off the veil and speak out, for do not I
Enter under the same coverlet as the Beloved?"
I said, "If the Beloved were exposed to outward view,
Neither wouldst thou endure, nor embrace, nor form.
Press thy suit, yet with moderation;
A blade of grass cannot, pierce a mountain.
If the sun that illumines the world
Were to draw nigher, the world would be consumed.
Close thy mouth and shut the eyes of this matter,
That, the world's life be not made a bleeding heart.
No longer seek this peril, this bloodshed;
Hereafter impose silence on the 'Sun of Tabriz.'
He said, "Thy words are endless. Now tell forth
All thy story from its beginning."

Story V

The Lion and the Beasts

In the book of Kalila and Damna a story is told of a lion who held all the beasts of the neighborhood in subjection, and was in the habit of making constant raids upon them, to take and kill such of them as he required for his daily food. At last the beasts took counsel together, and agreed to deliver up one of their company every day, to satisfy the lion's hunger, if he, on his part, would cease to annoy them by his continual forays. The lion was at first unwilling to trust to their promise, remarking that he always preferred to rely on his own exertions; but the beasts succeeded in persuading him that he would do well to trust Providence and their word. To illustrate the thesis that human exertions are vain, they related a story of a man who got Solomon to transport him to Hindustan to escape the angel of death, but was smitten by the angel the moment he got there. Having carried their point, the beasts continued for some time to perform their engagement. One day it came to the turn of the hare to be delivered up as a victim to the lion; but he requested the others to let him practice a stratagem. They scoffed at him, asking how such silly beast as he could pretend to outwit the lion. The hare assured them that wisdom was of God, and God might choose weak things to confound the strong. At last they consented to let him try his luck. He took his way slowly to the lion, and found him sorely enraged. In excuse for his tardy arrival he represented that he and another hare had set out together to appear before the lion, but a strange lion had seized the second hare, and carried it off in spite of his remonstrances. On hearing this, the lion was exceeding wroth, and commanded the hare to show him the foe who had trespassed on his preserves. Pretending to be afraid, the hare got the lion to take him upon his back, and directed him to a well. On looking down the well, the lion saw in the water the reflection of himself and of the hare on his back; and thinking that he saw his foe with the stolen hare, he plunged in to attack him, and was drowned, while the hare sprang off his back and escaped. This folly on the part, of the lion was predestined to punish him for denying God's ruling providence. So Adam, though he knew the names of all things, in accordance with God's predestination, neglected to obey a single prohibition, and his disobedience cost him dearly. Trust in God, as opposed to human exertions.

The beasts said, "O enlightened sage,
Lay aside caution; it cannot help thee against destiny;
To worry with precaution is toil and moil;
Go, trust in Providence, trust is the better part.
War not with the divine decree, O hot-headed one,
Lest that decree enter into conflict with thee.
Man should be as dead before the commands of God
Lest a blow befall him from the Lord of all creatures."
He said, "True; but though trust be our mainstay,
Yet the Prophet teaches us to have regard to means.
The Prophet cried with a loud voice,
'Trust in God, yet tie the camel's leg.'
Hear the adage, 'The worker is the friend of God;'
Through trust in Providence neglect not to use means.
Go, O Quietists, practice trust with self-exertion,
Exert yourself to attain your objects, bit by bit.
In order to succeed, strive and exert yourselves;
If ye strive not for your objects, ye are fools."
They said, "What is gained from the poor by exertions
Is a fraudulent morsel that will bring ill luck.
Again, know that self-exertion springs from weakness;
Relying on other means is a blot upon perfect trust.
Self-exertion is not more noble than trust in God.
What is more lovely than committing oneself to God?
Many there are who flee from one danger to a worse;
Many flee from a snake and meet a dragon.
Man plans a stratagem, and thereby snares himself;
What he takes for life turns out, to be destruction.
He shuts the door after his foe is in the house.
After this sort were the schemes of Pharaoh.
That jealous king slew a myriad babes,
While Moses, whom he sought, was in his house.
Our eyes are subject to many infirmities;
Go! annihilate your sight in God's sight.
For our foresight His foresight is a fair exchange;
In His sight is all that ye can desire.
So long as a babe cannot grasp or run,
It takes its father's back for its carriage.
But when it becomes independent and uses its hands,
It falls into grievous troubles and disgrace.
The souls of our first parents, even before their hands,
Flew away from fidelity after vain pleasure.
Being made captives by the command, 'Get down hence,'
They became bond-slaves of enmity, lust, and vanity.
We are the family of the Lord and His sucking babes.
The Prophet said, 'The people are God's family;'

He who sends forth the rain from heaven,
Can He not also provide us our daily bread?"
The lion said, "True; yet the Lord of creatures
Sets a ladder before our feet.
Step by step must we mount up to the roof!
The notion of fatalism is groundless in this place.
Ye have feet why then pretend ye are lame?
Ye have hands why then conceal your claws?
When a master places a spade in the hand of a slave,
The slave knows his meaning without being told.
Like this spade, our hands are our Master's hints to us;
Yea, if ye consider, they are His directions to us.
When ye have taken to heart His hints,
Ye will shape your life in reliance on their direction;
Wherefore these hints disclose His intent,
Take the burden from you, and appoint your work.
He that bears it makes it bearable by you,
He that is able makes it within your ability.
Accept His command, and you will be able to execute it;
Seek union with Him, and you will find yourselves united.
Exertion is giving thanks for God's blessings;
Think ye that your fatalism gives such thanks?
Giving thanks for blessings increases blessings,
But fatalism snatches those blessings from your hands.
Your fatalism is to sleep on the road; sleep not
Till ye behold the gates of the King's palace.
Ah! sleep not, O unreflecting fatalists,
Till ye have reached that fruit-laden Tree of Life
Whose branches are ever shaken by the wind,
And whose fruit is showered on the sleepers' heads.
Fatalism means sleeping amidst highwaymen.
Can a cock who crows too soon expect peace?
If ye cavil at and accept not God's hints,
Though ye count yourselves men, see, ye are women.
The quantum of reason ye possessed is lost,
And the head whose reason has fled is a tail.
Inasmuch as the unthankful are despicable,
They are at last cast into the fiery pit.
If ye really have trust in God, exert yourselves,
And strive, in constant reliance on the Almighty."
Wisdom is granted often times to the weak.
He said, "O friends, God has given me inspiration.
Often times strong counsel is suggested to the weak.
The wit taught by God to the bee
Is withheld from the lion and the wild ass.
It fills its cells with liquid sweets,

For God opens the door of this knowledge to it.
The skill taught by God to the silkworm
Is a learning beyond the reach of the elephant.
The earthly Adam was taught of God names,
So that his glory reached the seventh heaven.
He laid low the name and fame of the angels,
Yet blind indeed are they whom God dooms to doubt!
The devotee of seven hundred thousand years (Satan)
Was made a muzzle for that yearling calf (Adam),
Lest he should suck milk of the knowledge of faith,
And soar on high even to the towers of heaven.
The knowledge of men of external sense is a muzzle
To stop them sucking milk of that sublime knowledge.
But God drops into the heart a single pearl-drop
Which is not bestowed on oceans or skies!"
"How long regard ye mere form, O form-worshippers?
Your souls, void of substance, rest still in forms.
If the form of man were all that made man,
Ahmad and Abu Jahl would be upon a par.
A painting on a wall resembles a man,
But see what it is lacking in that empty form.
'Tis life that is lacking to that mere semblance of man.
Go! seek for that pearl it never will find.
The heads of earth's lions were bowed down
When God gave might to the Seven Sleepers' dog.
What mattered its despised form
When its soul was drowned in the sea of light?"
Human wisdom, the manifestation of divine.
On his way to the lion the hare lingered,
Devising a stratagem with himself.
He proceeded on his way after delaying long,
In order to have a secret or two for the lion.
What worlds the principle of Reason embraces!
How broad is this ocean of Reason!
Yea, the Reason of man is a boundless ocean.
O son, that ocean requires, as it were, a diver.
On this fair ocean our human forms
Float about, like bowls on the surface of water;
Yea like cups on the surface, till they are filled;
And when filled, these cups sink into the water.
The ocean of Reason is not seen ; reasoning men are seen;
But our forms (minds) are only as waves or spray thereof.
Whatever form that ocean uses as its instrument,
Therewith it casts its spray far and wide.
Till the heart sees the Giver of the secret,
Till it spies that Bowman shooting from afar,

It fancies its own steed lost, while in bewilderment
It is urging that steed hither and thither;
It fancies its own steed lost, when all the while
That swift steed is bearing it on like the wind.
In deep distress that blunder head
Runs from door to door, searching and inquiring,
"Who and where is he that hath stolen my steed?"
They say, "What is this thou ridest on, O master?"
He says, "True, 'tis a steed; but where is mine?"
They say, "Look to thyself, O rider; thy steed is there."
The real Soul is lost to view, and seems far off;
Thou art like a pitcher with full belly but dry lip;
How canst thou ever see red, green, and scarlet
Unless thou seest the light first of all?
When thy sight is dazzled by colors,
These colors veil the light from thee.
But when night veils those colors from thee,
Thou seest that colors are seen only through light.
As there is no seeing outward colors without light,
So it is with the mental colors within.
Outward colors arise from the light of sun and stars,
And inward colors from the Light on high.
The light that lights the eye is also the heart's Light;
The eye's light proceeds from the Light of the heart.
But the light that lights the heart is the Light of God,
Which is distinct from the light of reason and sense.
At night there is no light, and colors are not seen;
Hence we know what light is by its opposite, darkness.
At night no colors are visible, for light is lacking.
How can color be the attribute of dark blackness?
Looking on light is the same as looking on colors;
Opposite shows up opposite, as a Frank a Negro.
The opposite of light shows what is light,
Hence colors too are known by their opposite.
God created pain and grief for this purpose,
To wit, to manifest happiness by its opposites.
Hidden things are manifested by their opposites;
But, as God has no opposite. He remains hidden.
God's light has no opposite in the range of creation
Whereby it may be manifested to view.
Perforce "Our eyes see not Him, though He sees us."
Behold this in the case of Moses and Mount Sinai.
Discern form from substance, as lion from desert,
Or as sound and speech from the thought they convey.
The sound and speech arise from the thought;
Thou knowest not where is the Ocean of thought;

Yet when thou seest fair waves of speech,
Thou knowest there is a glorious Ocean beneath them.
When waves of thought arise from the Ocean of Wisdom,
They assume the forms of sound and speech.
These forms of speech are born and die again,
These waves cast themselves back into the Ocean.
Form is born of That which is without form,
And goes again, for, "Verily to Him do we return."
Wherefore to thee every moment come death and "return."
Mustafa saith, "The world endureth only a moment."
So, thought is an arrow shot by God into the air.
How can it stay in the air? It returns to God.
Every moment the world and we are renewed,
Yet we are ignorant of this renewing forever and aye.
Life, like a stream of water, is renewed and renewed,
Though it wears the appearance of continuity in form.
That seeming continuity arises from its swift renewal,
As when a single spark of fire is whirled round swiftly.
If a single spark be whirled round swiftly,
It seems to the eye a continuous line of fire.
This apparent extension, owing to the quick motion,
Demonstrates the rapidity with which it is moved.
If ye seek the deepest student of this mystery,
Lo! 'tis Husamu-'d-Din, the most exalted of creatures!

The Present

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Without the real truth, there can be no real justice, no real equality, no real success, no real progress, no real intelligence, no real security, no real happiness, no real love, no real life. Everything starts with the truth.

2 + 2 = 4: It does not equal anything else. The truth is, there is only one truth. Believing $2 + 2 = 5$ or 6 or anything else does not make it true. There are an infinite amount of wrong answers, but only one true answer.

Truth is what stands the test of experience. A man should look for what is and not for what he thinks should be. Albert Einstein

Common denominator: The truth is the only thing that can unite all human beings. It is what we all have in common, and that will never change. There is only one sky for all of us. Everyone eats and breathes and is born and dies etc. The ultimate truth is universal truth; it is the same for everyone, everywhere. It always has been and always will be. **We can now see the big picture of life.**

Only the truth can stop the wars and make the world the paradise it can be.

Reason: We can now use our ability to reason, deductive logic and extrapolation of the known evidence to know and understand things the evidence does not reveal directly, such as **life after death**. We have progressed enough to know and understand the fundamental truth of life. It will transform us and our world.

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.

Arthur Schopenhauer

Peak moments in your life feel good, because you get a larger percentage of what each moment of life actually contains. Your mind is the gatekeeper of life, and sometimes it lets a little true life in, but most of the time it does not.

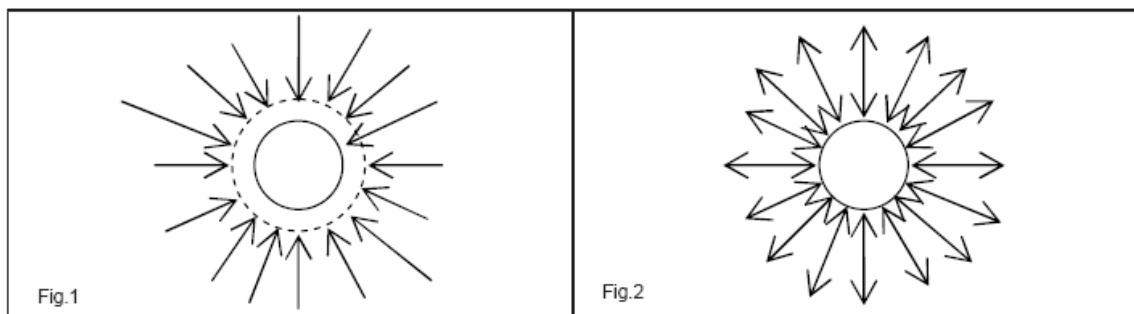


Figure 1 shows how mankind currently perceives life. Figure 2 shows true life. The arrows represent life coming to you from all directions. The dotted line shows

how your mind blocks most of the life coming to you. Without the mind blocking life, you receive all of life, **true life**, and reflect it all back out.

Seeing Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon for the first time is a peak moment for most people. Why does it make you feel so alive? Nothing really happens to you. Why doesn't it feel as good the second time you see it? You are seeing the same thing. **The reason is your mind opens up when something is special.**

It's not what you look at that matters; it's what you see.
Henry David Thoreau

The truth is, every moment of life is special, and you can be completely open to life most of the time. You have to see true life to see the truth. **This is the truth:**

Immortality: "It is impossible to be conscious of being unconscious."

You are reading this book, so you are conscious (alive). This means that you have always been conscious and always will be, because it is not possible for you to be aware of being dead (unconscious). You cannot be aware of not being aware; you cannot be conscious of being unconscious. You can be less conscious (sleep/coma), but not completely unconscious, because time would stand still for you. A billion years could pass, and you would not know it.

You are immortal, because it is impossible for you not to be. You cannot be aware of any gaps in life; it is continuous and never-ending from your own point of view. Have you ever experienced anything other than life? You haven't, because you cannot experience anything else; anything you experience is life.

Energy cannot be created or destroyed and consciousness cannot be created or destroyed for the same reason. **It changes form.** You cannot make nothing out of something, and if you are conscious of life now, you are something.

The deductive logic above reveals that we are not our bodies. We know our bodies die, and we know consciousness cannot, thus our consciousness (what we are) cannot be our bodies.

You will die physically, but you will be born again; being born happens, or you would not be here now. You were born into this life. It is what we know happens for certain. **There is no evidence anything else happens. True or false?**

Why would we think anything else happens or even can happen? People are playing make believe. We are dealing with time and space that never ends; if we were born once, it will happen again. **Things in nature repeat over and over.**

The only question is where and when you will be reborn and what you will be reborn as, and we can know that too.

Consciousness: People are trying to understand the universe independent of consciousness (life), and it is the most important factor in the equation.

The universe as it relates to conscious life can be understood now. It is the ultimate truth; the truth that will transform mankind and the world.

Animals are conscious (alive) with or without a rational thinking mind.

Many people think that human beings are the only animal that is conscious. Is a dog or cat conscious? Where do you draw the line, is a bird conscious?

The truth is, all animal life is conscious and alive just like we are. The only thing that makes humans different from other animals is we have a mind that can think and reason. We can know the truth, and those that know rise above animals.

Our true history: The hard evidence says **we** human beings (Homo sapiens) evolved from other animals. There is very little physical difference between us and other animals. We have blood, hearts, brains, skin and DNA in common. We behaved like them until just recently, and some people still do.

In addition to the evidence we have been digging up all over the world, through our understanding of the genetic code, we can now see that all animals, including humans, evolved up a evolutionary ladder. **There is no missing link now.**

Crown of creation: Evolution is no longer just a theory; it has been proven true beyond a reasonable doubt. The problem is even people who believe evolution is true disassociate themselves from the process. They some how skipped all the lower forms of animal life and just started out as the crown of creation at the top of the evolutionary ladder. **The evidence says we evolved as life evolved.**

Someone has to be all the other types of animals. A consciousness (spirit) is in dogs and cats. Other animals are alive just as you are and you know it.

It is time to see and accept the truth the evidence supports.

Make believe: I do not play make believe in real life, but billions of grown people do and say it is the truth. I no longer believe in Santa Clause and the other myths, legends, and fairy tales that the known evidence says are not true.

It is better to be blind than to see things that do not exist.

There is no point in denying the known evidence; it does not go away. When a preponderance (all) of the evidence says that something happened or did not happen, it is the truth beyond a reasonable doubt to honest and rational people.

Truth will have no gods before it. Friedrich Nietzsche

We have come a very, very long way, but we have a little further to go. The next and last step in our evolution is learning and accepting the truth of life, and this includes acknowledging our true past.

The ultimate truth frees us from the animal world we all evolved from.

The balance of physical things: There are two sides to every coin and two sides to everything else physical, because one side creates the other side. It is the same with everything that happens. Birth-death, old-young, big-small, strong-weak, up-down, rich-poor, beginning-end, fast-slow, pain-pleasure, win-lose, day-night, full-empty, high-low, in-out, right-wrong, success-failure, united-divided, give-receive, creation-destruction, **positive-negative**, etc.

Positive and negative forces moving in balance are the physical universe.

Everything physical (matter/energy) goes back and forth in balanced circles, cycles, or the equivalent. Even light and other forms of energy that appear to go straight out move in balanced, up and down waves.

The physical universe has to move in perfect balance to exist.

Luck: Good luck and bad luck are the balance in action and the way the balance most affects our lives. Luck is manifested on many levels. There is the day-today luck, from little things like getting a good parking space or getting a bad one, to big things, such as winning the lottery or finding out you have terminal cancer. Then there is the long-term luck. You are lucky if you are born with good looks, money, health, talent and intelligence. You are unlucky if you are born unattractive, poor, sickly and without much talent or intelligence. Most people are somewhere in between the extremes, but it does not matter, because we are immortal, and it will all balance out in time. Luck will move back and forth forever; everyone will get equal amounts of good and bad luck.

What goes around comes around.

The eternal mixer: The balance is the result of everything moving around randomly. Example: if you take a jar filled with black and white grains of sand and you shake it, it will turn gray and mix perfectly. No matter how long you shake it, the black and white grains of sand will always stay evenly mixed. Time and random movement will always create a perfect balance of all physical things. It is as certain as night and day, and the reason why we have a night and a day.

This is why on the Fourth of July in the US, about a 100 people will be killed in auto accidents, and every fourth, about the same amount are killed. An average of twelve auto accidents happen every minute. About six-thousand teenagers are killed in auto accidents every year in the US. About four million people are bitten

by dogs. Why are they always close to the same? **It is the balance at work.**

If you flip a coin a thousand times, it will come up heads about half the time and tails about half the time. The odds of random events are predictable; this is why Las Vegas always makes a profit on gambling year after year.

You can see the truth of life if you look at the big picture. You will see that disconnected, random events are predictable, because they always balance.

The good news is all of your dreams are going to come true. The bad news is, so will all of your nightmares, if you do not learn the truth of life.

Death is the great equalizer: If you are born with advantages, you can have more good times than bad times in your life, but when you die, you are reborn with disadvantages, and have more bad times than good times and vice versa. In the long run, no one has it better or worse than anyone else does, because life will always balance eventually. It is the known nature of the universe we live in.

Consequences: The knowledge of the balance does not mean there are no consequences of behavior. **Now you are responsible, as this book will show.**

The obvious is that which is never seen, until someone expresses it simply.
Khalil Gibran

Many educated people do not have open minds, and that is why they cannot see the truth as easily as people that are less educated, but more open minded.

The only thing that interferes with my learning is my education.
Albert Einstein

The truth about life is actually very simple; it is just hard to see for the first time.

Life: It all boils down to how you feel from moment to moment, how often you feel good and how often you feel bad, and it will be balanced like everything else physical. Your infinite past was balanced, and your infinite future will be too, unless you change from a physical being into a spiritual being. To change into a spiritual being, you just have to know the truth, which changes your point of view and your perspective of life so that you start to live your life as a spiritual being.

Know it to do it: Our life does not have to be just fifty-fifty like the physical world, because our spiritual-self, our immortal-self, is not physical and does not need to be balanced to exist. Our physical environment cannot fundamentally change, but we can. **You just have to know it to do it.**

Nothing is going to make any real difference in your life except separating yourself from the balanced physical world. It can and will change everything.

You separate yourself from the balance of physical life by seeing the truth.

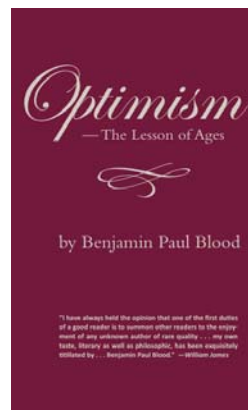
The truth reveals that you do not need to experience the bad to have the good. The bad will still happen, but you will perceive it differently. Perception is the only thing in the universe that does not need to balance. The knowledge of the balance changes your life. It leads to your transition into a spiritual being.

Good/bad: When you know the truth, you take the two sides of life, the good and bad side, and see them as one whole. You do this by understanding what the balancing force means. It means all bad times will pass and be compensated for by an equal amount of good times. It also means all good times will pass and be paid for with an equal amount of bad times. **It will always balance.**

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Optimism—The Lesson of Ages
Benjamin Paul Blood (1860)
(excerpt)
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Could we have proof of God's existence, there were no God worthy to be proved. Proof shifts its object into other essence, or other truth: but that which is infinite cannot be shifted to aught that is within our capacity. Incomprehensible as eternity, against what background shall our God stand relieved? Say space is filled, and time is filled, and we are a portion of that filling; how shall a part contain the whole?—how shall that which cannot be compassed be known, whether it be entirely proved or not? The poet cannot teach his poetry to a stone; nor can God condense his being to a picture in our souls; he were not God, nor we men. Yet God is in us, the assurance of his presence, whose majesty is the birth of reason. He is not afar, that we should see him. He is in the light of the eye, and in the object that it shines on. He is not a curiosity, a member of a species, or a thing to be represented by any device. He is the One—the original—the all in all. All creeds acknowledge him. His name needs no interpreter when they say "God created." Boundless and incomprehensible, yet indisputable, the key of all mystery, without form, without centre or circumference, beginning or end, the life, space, and atmosphere wherein all being dwells, words were not made to present him; we cannot show him to another, nor another to us; yet in the human soul he has said immemorially, "I am! and there is none beside me!"

It is queried whether God is self-conscious.—If the heavens should burst in thunder and say *aye!* what were we the wiser? We cannot conceive universal consciousness; we cannot receive an answer though it were given. Think not because our language contains the word *universal* that the word must convey to us an idea. It is but the symbol of an inconceivable thought, useful to the finitude of the soul when it would acknowledge a greater than itself.

We delight to fancy a lone and glorious self-love in the Almighty; yet from this method has grown some of the worst of our theological discourse. It has made God in man's image. It has invested him with error, confusion, repentance, and worse than all, anger. It has made folly, sin; it has made

policy, duty; it has made pain a judgment and a punishment; it has given to God all the frailties of man, and made man confound himself in efforts to prove—made him stultify himself in professions of faith in proof—that *justice* is lashing us solely for having opposed the will and thwarted the wishes of “the judge of all the earth.” But from this conceit of God in man’s image, bad though it be, worse conclusions are drawn than analogy will sanction. Will our heavenly father torture a child eternally for an offence at which his earthly father will but take him a box on the ear? We trace man’s cruelty to his weakness—to envy, excess, disease; but all things must obey the will and subserve the purpose of the Almighty, and fear, envy, disappointment cannot ruffle his brow. Even man is noble, generous and forgiving. Place a human life in jeopardy, and many lives will be risked to save it. Friend or foe, be a man fallen, he is the brother of the human race. Scarce a man living would torture his enemy’s dog for two days together; and shall He be believed to damn a man—He in whose image man was made?

It is pleasing to us to look back over the records of the earlier men of time, and to find that the wise of all ages have been truly brothers in this doctrine of the unity of God; and the more so because it is a doctrine which is attended with difficulties, when applied entirely to the destiny of man, which no record has come to us wholly explaining. We mean, chiefly, the difficulty of the origin of evil. Yet mark with what calm solemnity the first chapter of one of the oldest of books unfolds the doctrine of one God, in spite of evil:—“God is one: he has created all: it is a perfect sphere, without beginning or end. . . Thou shalt not seek to discover the nature and essence of the Eternal, nor by what laws he governs. Such an attempt would be vain, and criminal. . . . It is enough for thee to contemplate day and night his power, his wisdom, and his goodness, through his works.”—This from the Shastah. Again:—“The sea enters the vessel that floats upon it; but time breaks the vessel, and the sea receives its own. And man is as a vessel, and God is as the sea; and the soul, God’s power, returns to him who emitted it.”