

## WHITE LOTUS DAY - MAY 8 - Program 3

### Note for Program Chairman:

- It is effective to have the material presented by several people.
- Sign people up before hand so they can be prepared.
- Each can read a short passage or present a program segment (3 to 5 minutes).
- Source material can be from the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The Light of Asia*.
- Suitable music can be arranged.
- A flower arrangement is encouraged, (white flowers are symbolical of the white lotus).
- A picture H. P. Blavatsky should be included.

### Program Outline:

**Open with musical selection.** (Wagner's Siegfried Idyll could be used).

Thought for meditation taken from *The Voice of the Silence*:

Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain—as the lotus  
bares its heart to drink the morning sun. Let not the fierce  
sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the  
sufferer's eye. But let each burning human tear drop on thy  
heart, and there remain. Nor ever brush it off, until the pain  
that caused it is removed.  
'Tis from the bud of renunciation of the self that springeth the  
sweet fruit of final liberation.

**1st Reader:** Her friends and associates, affectionately knew Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, as H. P. B., she is still referred to by H.P.B. today, and she was one of the co-founders of The Theosophical Society. H. P. B. was the channel for bringing the wisdom of Theosophy before the Western world and Col. Henry Steel Olcott the first International President, co-founder and the chief organizer of the movement.

In her will she expressed the wish that each year on the anniversary of her passing, May 8, 1891, some of her friends should assemble at the Society's Headquarters and read a chapter from two works which she treasured:

- *The Light of Asia*
- *The Bhagavad Gita*.

Since then Theosophists have gathered together with their group on May 8 to pay tribute to this remarkable woman.

Co1. Olcott suggested that the anniversary be known as White Lotus Day. It is very appropriate since the lotus has so much symbolism and meaning. The lotus

is the symbol of spiritual unfoldment, of the holy, the pure. Just as the lotus grows up from the darkness of the mud to the surface of the water, opening its blossom only after it has raised itself beyond the surface, and remaining unsullied from both earth and water, which nourished it—in the same way the mind, born in the human body, unfolds its true qualities ('petals') after it has raised itself beyond the turbid floods of passions and ignorance, and transforms the dark powers of the depths into the radiantly pure nectar of Enlightenment-consciousness, the incomparable jewel in the lotus-blossom. If the urge towards light were not dormant in the germ that is hidden deep down in the darkness of the earth, the lotus would not turn towards the light. If the urge towards a higher consciousness and knowledge were not dormant even in a state of deepest ignorance, enlightened ones could never arise from the darkness. (*Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, Lama Anagarika Govinda).

**2nd Reader:** H. P. B. set an example for us to follow, in transcending her personality and reaching a higher state of knowledge. Each one of us can do the same, raising our minds from the darkness of ignorance into the sunlight of understanding. Transcendence of our personality is born from our own effort and we must do the work ourselves.

H. P. Blavatsky had a deep knowledge of the ancient scriptures and in the preparation of her monumental work *The Secret Doctrine* drew from them universal truths. She modestly said, quoting the words of Montaigne, that these truths are "made into a nosegay of culled flowers." The *Bhagavad Gita*, the ancient Hindu sacred scripture is one flower. It tells of the battle raging within man, and the way to liberation. Here is a short selection from that work. A short selection to be read --

(Besant's translation of this work is excellent, or the poetic *Song Celestial* by Sir Edwin Arnold is sometimes used.)

**3rd Reader:** In becoming a Buddhist, H.P.B. never thought Buddhism was an exclusive truth. For her it was the highest expression of the principles she wished to live by. She was especially fond of Sir Edwin Arnold's "The Light of Asia", that beautiful poem telling the life and teachings of the Lord Buddha. Here is an excerpt from this poem.

(A short reading selection from "*The Light of Asia*".)

**4th Reader:** H.P.B. also known as Madame Blavatsky, sought to correlate Oriental teachings with science and philosophy of later writers with the lore of the ancients. In 1877 her magnificent work, *Isis Unveiled* was published. The first edition was exhausted in ten days, and three editions were produced in seven months. One can readily imagine what its impact must have had on the Western scholastic community of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and ushering in the 20th century with a new foundation of knowledge. Her greatest work *The Secret Doctrine* is an

extraordinarily profound book for those who are seeking a deeper meaning to life. In it she states three fundamental propositions:

1) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle—on which all speculation is impossible since it transcends the powers of human conception—The Absolute Reality.

2) The eternity of the universe in toto—periodically the “playground of numberless universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing”, it asserts the absolute universality of the law of periodicity, of ebb and flow.

3) The fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Oversoul—. These are developed with almost staggering erudition and with reference to the great writings and teachings of almost every nation, era, religion and culture. She shows a great unifying principle within and behind them all. In her chapter on such subjects as gravitation, force, atoms, solar energy, etc.

In 1888, H.P.B. described ideas developed in Einstein’s Unified Field Theory. Many of her ideas helped to shape the basis of contemporary scientific and religious theory of today.

**5th Reader:** G. R. S. Mead, who was H. P. B.’s private secretary and General Secretary of The Theosophical Society in Europe, said in his oration at her funeral:

*“The one great purpose of our teacher’s life was to restore to mankind the knowledge of those great spiritual truths which today we call Theosophy. To her who knew so well its true and inner meaning, Theosophy was an ever-present power in her life, and she was ceaseless in her endeavors to spread knowledge of the living truths of which she had such full assurance, so that by their ever-widening influence the wave of materiality in science and religion might be checked, and a real and lasting spiritual foundation laid for the future progress and brotherhood of mankind.”*

And now let us share a few thoughts from others who knew H. P. B. well, and wrote of her influence on their lives.

**6th Reader:** Francesca Arundale:

*“It was quite impossible to conceive that the gentle, and I might say childish entity, could be the same as the strong and angry Russian, who used language not altogether parliamentary. There was also another phase, or rather aspect, of this mysterious personality. It happened many times in the course of my connection with her that I became aware of an unusual power proceeding from her, an awe-inspiring influence, a penetration that made one feel that the blue-gray eyes could pierce through the veil of flesh and read one’s very soul. Her one great fear was that the dignity of the Masters might in any way be lowered. She was ready if need be to throw herself and her honor before the public, provided that no breath of aspersion should be cast upon Their names.”*

**7th Reader:** Countess Constance Wachtmeister:

*"All who have known and loved H. P. B. have felt what a charm there was about her; how truly kind and lovable she was; at such times such a bright, childish nature seemed to beam around her, and a spirit of joyous fun would sparkle her whole countenance and cause the most winning expression I have ever seen on a human face. One of the marvels of her character was that to everyone she was different. I have never seen her treat two people alike."*

**H. S. Olcott:** *"Often I would think I knew her perfectly and presently discover there were deeper depths in her selfhood that I had not sounded. Her family had no idea from whence she drew her exhaustless stream of curious erudition."*

**Annie Besant:** *"H. P., B. was a forceful character; outspoken in her criticism of hypocrisy, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. She did not hesitate to express her ideas directly to those she criticized, regardless of their position or rank. This gained her many friends and many enemies. She could never be overlooked when she was present.—Over and over in my own case, she has led me straight to hidden motives, to concealed weaknesses, to covered pitfalls. And any of her pupils who could bear her scrutiny and criticism without resentment might be sure of similar aid."*

*"When anyone was seeking the most difficult knowledge—self-knowledge—she would use her rare power of insight, would warn of hidden dangers, point to concealed characteristics, unravel the thread of half-understood or non-understood qualities and defects, and thus guide the student in his efforts to know himself, and to escape from the web of illusion."*

J. D. Buck, a prominent member in the earliest days of the Society, comments in these descriptive words regarding H. P. B.:

*"If it be just to judge a tree by its fruit, a character by its service to humanity and a personality by its forgetfulness of self, then will H. P. B. soon be recognized in her true character and placed among the benefactors of humanity."*

**8th Reader:** The Lotus, that beautiful symbol of creative evolution in man and universe, was particularly appropriate to H. P. B. Rising from the mud of material life and awakening the true inner nature, giving that realization to all was her goal. G.R.S. Mead said, "We believe that if H. P. B. could stand here and speak to us now, this would be her message to all the members—and to all who, without distinction of race, creed or sex, are with us in heart and sympathy today, she would tell us, as she has told many already, that:

'A clean life; an open mind; a pure heart; an eager intellect; an unveiled spiritual perception; a brotherliness for all; a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction; a courageous endurance of personal injustice; a brave

declaration of principles; a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked; and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the sacred science depicts; these are the Golden Stairs, up the steps of which the learner must climb to the temple of Divine Wisdom.”

**(Close with a musical selection and a meditation on the last paragraph)**