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Spending a few hours with *The Secret Doctrine* can be an effective antidote for the maladies of modern life, some of which include a myopic perspective wherein small events loom large; a feeling that one's existence serves no greater purpose than utilitarian ends; a compulsion to pursue immediate pleasures at the expense of lasting values; and an increasingly combative approach in a world marked by factions, partisanship, and adversarial relationships.

In a world of almost seven billion people, of what significance is one person? And without a deep sense of purpose, can one be fully human? In Marguerite Yourcenar's novel, *Memoirs of Hadrian*, the Roman Emperor Hadrian arrived at this insight:

The mind of man is reluctant to consider itself as the product of chance, or the passing result of destinies over which no god presides, least of all himself. A part of every life, even a life meriting little regard, is spent in searching out the reasons for its existence, its starting point, and its source.

Modern life, with its intrusive media and rapid technological change, creates the sense of time being compressed, of events speeding up, gaining momentum and even careening out of control; all of which compels us to feel that we are being swept along relentlessly by blind and impersonal forces to destinations unknown.

By contrast, *The Secret Doctrine* provides us with a broad and timeless perspective by speaking of eternity and the illusory nature of time; by describing grand evolutionary cycles of immense magnitude; by restoring knowledge of our fundamental identity with the Divine Principle. As these teachings are assimilated, the sense of hopelessness dissipates; outer circumstances lose their power to disturb us; and no longer do we feel divided and isolated from the rest of humanity.

Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.

— Shelley

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