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THE MOST PERSONAL VIEW

(In parentheses, the main century of influence)

Gautama Buddha (VI-V B.C.)

Texts taken from ByAuthor BA33

I am always at the beginning. Every day of my life I sow the seeds that I will one day reap.

I teach about suffering and how to end it. Cessation of suffering is possible.

My teachings are not a philosophy. It is the result of direct experience. My teaching is a means of practice, not something to cling to or worship, it is like a raft used to cross the river.

I will teach you the Truth and the Great Way that leads to Truth. It occurred to me that I should teach this Truth because it is true happiness and peace.

I, always knowing the living beings who are the Way and those who are not, and in response to those who can be saved, preach to them a variety of dharmas. Whenever I have this thought, "What can I do for beings to enter the Way, without excuse and quickly, to perfect themselves?" I simply preach the Great Way.

I have only said a little of what I know. Why have I not said the rest? Because it would not take you to Nirvana.

Let go of the past, let go of the future, and let go of the present (front, back, middle). Cross over to the other shore of existence, with the mind released everywhere, no longer suffer birth and decay. This is how I went out to teach.

What I taught is comparable to the leaves in my hand. What I did not teach is comparable to the totality of the leaves in this forest. One cannot finish the explanation of the unspeakable.

Teach you? I cannot teach you. Go and experience for yourself. No guide or teacher can light the lamp for us (at most he will tell us how to do it). Only you yourself are qualified to light your own inner lamp. You have to do your own work.

Just as gold is burned, cut and rubbed, examine my words carefully and do not accept them simply out of respect.

I do not struggle with the world, but the world struggles with me. I call him wise who, being innocent, endures insults and blows with patience equal to his strength.

Whoever unwisely does me wrong, I will return the protection of my most unfailing love; and the more evil comes from that person, the more good will come from me. As an elephant on the battlefield resists arrows shot with bows from all sides, so will I endure oppression.

Even if others do not do good, I alone will do good. Even if others do evil, I alone will not do evil.

If people knew, as I know, the results of giving and sharing, they would not eat anything without first giving.

I knew that most people never see this Reality because they are attached to the material aspect of the world. Illusions of self and others fill their vision. I also realized that there are stale people who limit their own vision.

Just as a lotus flower is born in the water, grows in the water and rises out of the water to stand above it without stain, so I, born in the world, raised in the world and having overcome the world, live without stain for the world.

May I abide in compassion. May I face the suffering and ignorance of others with compassion.

When I was young, near the beginning of my life, I looked around me with true attention and saw that all things are subject to decay.

When thoughtless people see someone dead, they are disgusted and horrified, going so far as to think that they too will die someday. I thought to myself: I don't want to be like thoughtless people. After that, I could no longer feel the usual intoxication for life.

Neither my life of luxury in the palace nor my life as an ascetic in the forest were paths to enlightenment.

I was aware of the ancient path trodden by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient way? It is simply this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right attention, right concentration. Following the Noble Path is like entering a dark room with a light in your hand; all the darkness will dissipate and the room will be filled with light.

There have been many Buddhas before me and there will be many Buddhas in the future.

After much searching for Truth and knowledge, the depth of Reality came to me with a clarity never known before. Having understood all by myself, whom shall I call my teacher?

After 48 years, I have said nothing. In all my life, I never said a single word. I got nothing at all from Supreme Enlightenment, and for that very reason it is called Supreme Enlightenment.

The discipline I have imparted to you will guide you when I am gone. Practice mindfulness diligently to reach the goal of awakening.

I know what I have given you; I do not know what you have received.

Through experience I have attained *Nirvana*, which is unbegotten, peerless, incorruptible and undefiled. Indeed, I have attained this condition, which is profound, difficult to see, difficult to comprehend, tranquil, excellent, beyond the reach of mere logic, subtle, and which can only be realized by the wise.

I wish to be free of barriers when I die, and Buddha will welcome me from far away.

Seeking but not finding the builder of this house, I travelled life after life, through countless births in the cycle of existence. Again and again I faced the suffering of repeated births. O builder of houses, I have discovered you! You will never build me a house again. My mind is free of stray thoughts and has done away with selfish desires. My goal is accomplished, I have broken the chains of illusion, I am free from craving and unsullied, I have removed the arrows of changing existence. This is my last body.

Lao Tzu (VI-V B.C.)

In eternal non-existence I seek the spirituality of things!

Some say my teachings are meaningless. Others call it lofty but impractical. But for those who have looked within, this nonsense makes perfect sense. And for those who put it into practice, this elevation has deep roots.

Socrates (V B.C.)

The more I know, the more I know that I know nothing.

Any authority I may have, is based solely on knowing the little I know.

I call myself a Peace Warrior... because the battles we fight are within.

Who do I call educated? First of all, those who handle well the circumstances they face on a daily basis. Next, those who are decent and honourable in their dealings with all human beings, bearing easily and with good character what is offensive in others and being as pleasant and reasonable with their associates as it is humanly possible to be...those who keep their material pleasures always under control and are not finally overcome by their misfortunes...those who are not spoiled by their successes, who do not abandon their true Self but stand firm as wise and sober-minded human beings.

Beloved Pan and all other gods who frequent this place, give me beauty within the soul; and may the outer and inner human being be one.

How many things I do not need! I love to go and see all the things without which I am happy.

In my investigations in the service of God, I found that those who had the highest reputation were almost the most deficient, while those who thought themselves inferior were the most knowledgeable.

I will not yield to any individual against what is right for fear of death, even if I should have to die immediately for not yielding.

You also must have good hope as to death, gentlemen of the jury, and bear in mind this one Truth, that a good human being cannot be harmed either in life or in death, and that his affairs are not neglected by the gods. What has happened to me now has not happened to me of my own accord, but it is clear to me that it was better for me to die now and be rid of the trouble. That is why my divine sign did not oppose me at any time. That is why I am not angry with those who condemned me nor with my accusers. Of course, that was not their purpose when they accused and condemned me, but they did think they were hurting me, and for that they deserve the blame.

I do but persuade you all, old and young alike, not to care for your person or your property, but and chiefly to care for the greater betterment of Soul.

I do not care what people say about me. I care about my mistakes.

I am a Citizen of the World, and my Nationality is Good Will.

Antiphon, just as another human being enjoys a good horse, or a dog, or a bird, I enjoy good friends even more. And if I have something good, I show it to them and introduce them to others who will be useful to them as far as virtue is concerned. And together with my friends I go through the treasures of the sages of old that they left written in books, and we examine them.

If we see something good, we select it, and consider it a great benefit, if we are able to be useful to one another.

Obligation sends children to bed at their hour, but love covers their necks with blankets and gives them kisses and hugs. Yesterday is experience; tomorrow is hope; today is passing from one to the other. The happiest people on earth don't have the best of everything...they make the best of everything. I can't teach them anything, I can only make them think.

Men and women of Athens, I honour and love you; but I will obey God rather than you, and as long as I have life and strength I will never cease to practice and teach philosophy.

Plato (IV B.C.)

Grant that I may be beautiful in my inner Soul, and that all my outward possessions may be in harmony with my inner being. May I regard the wise as rich, and may I have such riches as only a person in moderation can have.

My frankness in speaking makes people hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I speak the Truth?

I will prove with my life that my critics are liars.

I really do not know, Socrates, how to express what I mean. For one way or another our arguments, whatever ground we support them on, seem to turn around and away from us.

I only ask you to think of Truth and not of Socrates.

Aristotle (IV B.C.)

Plato is dear to me, but even dearer to me is Truth.

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than he who overcomes his enemies; for the hardest victory is over oneself.

The fool tells me his reason; the wise man persuades me with mine.

Mencius —Mengke— (IV B.C.)

I don't like disputes. I have no choice. So I like life and I like justice; if I can't keep the two together, I give up life and choose justice.

Chuang Tzu —Zhuangzi— (IV B.C.)

Within my breast there can be no sorrow; I feel the great spirit of the world boiling within me.

Great truths do not take hold of the hearts of the masses. And now that the world is in error, how shall I lead, though I know the true way? If I know that I cannot succeed and yet try to force success, this world would be but another source of error.

Better then to give up and strive no more. But if I do not strive, who will?

There is a principle. There is no beginning of that principle. There is no beginning of that, no beginning of the principle. There is something. There is no nothing. There is something before the beginning of something and nothing, and something before that. Suddenly there is something and nothing. But between something and nothing, I still don't really know which is something and which is nothing. Now I just said something, but I don't really know whether I said something or not.

When my wife had just died, I couldn't help but feel affected. Soon, however, I examined the matter from the beginning. At first, she was not alive, she had no form, not even substance. But somehow or other, then came her substance, then her form, then her journey of life in the body. Now, through another change, she has died (left the body). The whole process is like the sequence of the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. While she lies thus in the great mansion of the Universe, for me to go about weeping and wailing would be to proclaim myself ignorant of natural laws. That is why I stopped.

Heaven and Earth (Nature) and I live together. All things and I form an inseparable Unity.

Epicteto (II)

We write beautiful maxims; but are we well imbued with them, and are we putting them into practice?

There is only one thing for which God has sent me into the world, and that is to perfect my nature in all sorts of virtue or strength; and there is nothing that I cannot use for that purpose.

Plotinus (III)

I strive to return the Divine in me to the Divine in the Whole.

Giordano Bruno (XVI)

Neither do I like to hide the truth I see, nor am I afraid to express it openly. I joined the war between the light and darkness, science and ignorance, everywhere. For this I had difficulties everywhere I went to, and I lived as a target for the anger of the official academics, who were fathers of ignorance, as well as the anger of the thick-headed majority.

Why, I say, do so few understand and grasp the inner strength? He who in himself sees all, is all. The time will come when all will see what I see.

I do not know when, but I know that many will come into this world to develop the arts and sciences, to sow the seeds of a new culture that will blossom, unexpectedly, suddenly, just when power deludes itself into believing it has won.

Perhaps you will pass sentence against me with greater fear than I will have in receiving it.

I fought and, therefore, I believed in my victory. Even more: I did not fear death and I preferred a courageous death to a life of ignorance.

I need not instruct you on my belief: time gives all and takes all away; everything changes but nothing perishes; The ONE is immutable, eternal and ever enduring, one and the same with itself. With this philosophy my spirit grows, my mind expands. However dark the night may be, I await the dawn, and those who dwell in the day await the night. Rejoice, then, and be upright, and return love for love.

Francis Bacon (XVI-XVII)

I would like, in my own arbitrary way, to approach the real human being.

I believe in deeply ordered chaos.

Galileo Galilei (XVI-XVII)

Infinitely astonished, I thank God, who has been pleased to make me the first observer of wonderful things, not revealed to past ages.

But, as my private lectures and my domestic pupils are a great hindrance and interruption to my studies, I wish to live entirely exempt from the former, and largely from the latter. In short, I would wish to earn my bread by my writings.

You may force me to say what you will; you may insult me for saying what I say. And yet it moves.

Baruch Spinoza (XVII)

I have diligently tried not to laugh at the acts of human beings, not to regret them, not to detest them, but to understand them.

Immanuel Kant (XVIII)

I freely admit that it was precisely the memory of David Hume that many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic dream and gave an entirely different direction to my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy.

At some future day it will be demonstrated, I cannot say when or where, that the human Soul is already, while in earthly life, in uninterrupted communication with those who live in another world.

I feel a complete thirst for knowledge and a great restlessness to go further, as well as satisfaction at every acquisition. There was a time when I believed that this alone could constitute the honour of mankind, and I felt contempt for the ignorant rabble who know nothing.

Herbert Spencer (XIX)

The idea of disembodied spirits is not supported by the evidence at all, and I cannot accept it.

Thomas H. Huxley (XIX)

When I reached intellectual maturity and began to ask myself whether I was an atheist, theist or pantheist; materialist or idealist; Christian or freethinker. I found that the more I learned and pondered, the less prepared the answer was; until, at last, I came to the conclusion that I had neither art nor part with any of these appellations, except the last one: freethinker.

I would rather have a monkey for an ancestor than a bishop.

Helena P. Blavatsky (XIX)

I speak "with absolute certainty" only as far as my personal belief is concerned. Those who do not have the same warrant for their belief as I do would be very gullible and foolish to accept it on blind faith. Nor does the writer believe any more than her correspondent and her friends in any "authority," much less in a "personal divine revelation."

I have pledged my word to help people find Truth as long as I live and I will keep my word. Let them despise and insult me. Let some call me a medium and a spiritualist, and others an impostor. The day will come when posterity will learn to know me better.

Ramakrishna (XIX)

As I live, I learn.

I had to practice each religion for a while: Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. In addition, I followed the paths of the Śāktas, Vaishnavas and Vedāntists. I realized that there is only one God toward whom all walk; but the paths are different.

Max Planck (XIX-XX)

When I began my studies in physics [in Munich in 1874] and asked my venerable teacher Philipp von Jolly for advice, he described physics to me as a highly developed, almost fully mature science. Possibly in one or another corner there was a dust particle or a small bubble to be examined and classified, but the system as a whole was there quite secure, and theoretical physics was visibly approaching that degree of perfection which, for example, geometry had already had for centuries.

Swami Vivekananda (XIX-XX)

Texts taken from ByAuthor BA43

All life is a succession of dreams. My ambition is to be a conscious dreamer, that's all.

The moment I realize that God is seated in the temple of every human body, the moment I stand in reverence before every human being and see God in him, the moment I am free from bondage, everything that binds fades away and I am free.

If in this hell of a world one can bring a little joy and peace, if only for a day, to the heart of a single person, that alone is true; this I have learned after suffering all my life; all the rest is pure illegal alcohol....

God did not give me everything I wanted, but He gave me everything I needed!

I must love for Love. I cannot trade in Love.

Vivekananda once remarked: In trying to practice religion, eighty percent of people become unfaithful, disinterested; and about fifteen percent become mad, fanatical; only the remaining five percent attain immediate knowledge of the infinite Truth.

To me, the very essence of Knowledge is the concentration of the mind, not the gathering of facts. If I had to redo my education and had anything to say about it, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then, with a perfect instrument, I could collect facts at will.

Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta. From the beginning he was a precocious child of exceptional energy. However, his innate tendency toward meditation manifested itself even in his early years. For along with the ordinary games of childhood, he played at meditation.

Don't think I imagine it, I see it.

This Universe is my body. I am the Infinite, only now I am not aware of it. But I am struggling to gain this consciousness of Infinity, and perfection (Realization) will be attained when the full consciousness of this Infinity comes.....

I am determined to die in the game of beginnings and endings. That is all the religion I know. I have not attained it, but I strive to do so.

People laugh at me because I am different; I laugh at people because they are all the same.

Bertrand Russell (XX)

My whole religion is this: to fulfil all duties and expect no reward for it, neither here nor in the hereafter.

Aldous Huxley (XX)

I write everything down many times. All my thoughts are second thoughts.

I wanted to change the world. But I have discovered that the only thing you can be sure to change is yourself.

People often ask me what is the most effective technique to transform their life. It's a little embarrassing that, after years and years of research and experimentation, I have to say that the best answer is: be a little nicer to each other.

Ram Dass – Richard Alpert (XX)

Texts taken from ByAuthor BA53

I would like my life to be a statement of Love and compassion, and where it is not, that is where my work lies.

I would say that the goal of my life has been initially to free myself and then to realize that my freedom is not independent of others. Then I come to that circle where one works on oneself as a gift to other people so as not to create more suffering. I help people as a work on myself and work on myself to help people.

I am not interested in being a "lover". I am only interested in being Love.

I have to love people's souls. Because I cannot love all incarnations. To love their souls, I have to identify with my own Soul. And then I can feel a lot of compassion for that Soul that has an incarnation like George Bush. I feel compassion. That's karma right there. Compassion and Love, that's it.

If I see a dilemma with Western man, it is that he cannot accept his own inner beauty. He cannot accept that he is pure light, that he is pure Love, that he is pure consciousness, that he is divine.

"Inevitably" is an excellent word, "inevitably" means that you are on a train, and the train is going in one direction, and you are at the front of the train running as fast as you can towards the back of the train, in the opposite direction that the train is going. But it doesn't matter, because when the train arrives at the station, you arrive too. That's inevitable. That's my life.

Conviction is in the Soul. Belief is thought. Conviction is so rich. Conviction is given to me by my Spiritual Self.

I have firmly come to the conclusion that there are no more "external issues" for me. I cannot be told who to hate, who to fight, who to subdue; I see only a "we" in my heart.

Ramana Maharshi (XX)

They are discouraged because they see my death near, because they say that I am going away. But where could I go and how? I am not going anywhere, I will be there where I always am.

When the Heart speaks to the Heart, what is there to say?

Paul Brunton (XX)

Texts taken from ByAuthor BA13

It is not without much reluctance that I have ventured to betray aloud the intimate experiences received in secret and solitary communion with nature. I would fain have harboured them until this body was gone, when their fate would carry no concern for me. But the bidding of my spiritual Guides was such that these words have gone out into print.

It is not easy to translate this sacred silence into comprehensible meaning, to describe a content where there is no form, to ascend from a region as deep as Atlantis is sunk today and speak openly in familiar, intelligible language; but I must try.

I must say at once that I do not claim to represent any teacher anywhere of any time, nor orthodox system of religion or metaphysics, mysticism or occultism. None of the representatives of any, very old or more recent, can therefore rightly say that I am giving an incorrect exposition in this writing.

If I make a first formal appearance as a teacher, it is only in deference to the mission now imposed on me and the mandate now given me.

I prefer anonymity for my work but fate has ignored my preference.

I did not seek to become the formulator of such a unique and priceless message to mankind. Indeed knowing myself in weakness as well as strength, I naturally shrink from seeking such an immense responsibility and would rather have helped and served a worthier man to formulate the message. This is not to say that I underrate its value, its dignity, its public prestige.

But all my previous attempts to evade the task having ended in failure, I now positively and affirmatively—no longer reluctantly and hesitantly—step forward to its accomplishment. I do so moreover with tranquil joy, for I am utterly convinced in the deepest recess of my heart, no less than in the logical thinking of my brain, that the teaching is so greatly needed in our time by those who have sought in vain for comprehensive elucidation of the problem of their existence, that I feel the help it will give them constitutes the best possible use of my energies, talents, and days in this incarnation.

I write for those who have felt the truth in intuitive flashes as well as for those who must be argued into it by intellectual reasonings.

I have gathered my materials from the West as well as the East, from modern science as well as ancient metaphysics, from Christian mysticism as well as Hindu occultism.

It demanded no less than hundreds of interviews with different teachers and hermits, thousands of miles of travel to reach them, and at least a hundred thousand pages of the most abstruse reading in the world before I could bring my course of personal study in the hidden philosophy to a final close. Today I have not got the time to take others through such a long and arduous course and they have probably not got the patience to endure it.

All this was a kind of training, ripening the mind and broadening its experience for the task in which I have at last engaged myself—the intellectual shaping of a great synthesis and its transposition to the literary plane.

My researches were made not only amongst modern books and ancient texts and living men. They were also made in the mysterious within-ness of my own consciousness.

I did not merely observe and describe these experiences from outside, as an intellectual scientific researcher might do, but I penetrated into them and revealed what was found there to others who lacked the capacity to accompany me.

With more than forty years spent in these studies and with the observation of thousands of people engaged in their practical application, I have become familiar with most of the leading mystical ideas. What is better is that I have also watched results in practice all over the world. Out of this experience, certain definite conclusions have formed themselves and forced my acceptance. The fact that I belong to no special group, no particular religion, no separate organization, but keep my mind open for truth from any direction with complete independence, has doubtless helped the formulation of these conclusions.

Here then is a teaching, very old and very wise, which summarizes all human knowledge, actual and possible, and which shows man how best to shape his personal and practical life. I am not its originator. I can but try to re-present it to a troubled, broken, and blinded world which waits for this knowledge in modern form, as a benighted traveller waits for the dawn.

The formulation of this grand synthesis is my chosen mission, both as a researcher and a writer. I am neither the originator of this doctrine nor even its prophet. The first man who ventured into the unknown within-ness of the Universe and of himself was its originator whilst every man who has since voiced this discovery has been its prophet.

My writing is both a form of sharing knowledge and a way of teaching it at one and the same time. It is a response to my natural desire to pass on to others some ideas that have taken their place in my pattern of life-meaning, but it is also an attempt to explain and propagate those ideas for the benefit of these others.

The subject of this work is no less than the total regeneration of man. No more practical subject could be written about, yet it is too often deemed interesting only to dreamers or fanatics. No more important one could be brought to our attention, for it is the very purpose for which the infinite power has put us into existence on this earth today. Jesus proclaimed it when he said, "Ye shall be born again." It is the process which plants, grows, and ripens all those attributes of the true human being that distinguish him from the merely animal being.

These teachings have appeared in the world in their present form and at the present time because they correspond to a genuine need of a certain section of humanity.

The worth of this teaching does not depend upon the numbers of people who espouse it. The weaker the response which it receives from the world in general, the stronger should be the effort put forth by the few, if they really believe in it, to keep it alive.

The notion that there is something futile about philosophy is quite correct when applied to what passes under that name very often, but quite incorrect when applied to genuine philosophy; and it is genuine philosophy which is here presented.

These teachings are not the result of conjecture nor the mirror of opinion. They are insights got by an opening of the inner eyes. This fact must be pointed out, in all humility, if they are to carry to any reader the revelatory understanding which they have already brought the writer.

I have written many things in my earlier books which I now wish I had never written. Time has forced me to revise beliefs, impressions, estimates, and even principles. I was misled by others in some cases and went astray through my own defects in others. Again and again dark moods have come over me solely because of past mistakes. They have often caused me unhappy moments. Nevertheless, compensation creeps in now and then despite myself. For as a scientific friend at the University of Cambridge, who sees the white as well as black in them reminds me, the essence of these books is a true one, their general effect is a valuable one, and their contribution is a necessary one in these times. And, moreover, they are perhaps the most important contents, after all. If I have done nothing more than to affirm certain unalterable verities, such as the existence of man's divine soul, and to show a way to the discovery thereof, I have done something that has made many people happier and my writing has not been quite pointless. That is the credit which may balance my debits.

All my previous life and travel, all my researches and experiences have been leading up to this fuller and culminating revelation that I have been asked to communicate to the world of seekers.

I would be failing in a duty to those less fortunate if through fear of being thought a boaster I failed to state that my researches have led me to the certain discovery of the Soul.

I am a researcher, that is my special job. Then I go on to convert the results of my researches into notes and reports, into analyses and reflections. Later I draw upon this material for my published writings.

Writing, which is an exercise of the intellect to some, is an act of worship to me. I rise from my desk in the same mood as that in which I leave an hour of prayer in an old cathedral, or of meditation in a little wood.

I conceive my work to be the blowing of smouldering coals of aspiration into burning flames of inspiration, expressible and visible in the end as altruistic action.

It is true that my writings represent a simplification of the philosophy of truth and that therefore they do not adequately cover the ground, but this is not to say that they represent a distortion of it.

The purpose of these pages is not to attack but to explain, to appeal, and to suggest. Their criticism is constructive and untouched by malice. It comes from a well-wisher and not from an opponent of religion: therefore it ought not to be resented.

Mine is a religion which cannot be named, a God who cannot be discussed, a worship which cannot be seen or heard. All that I revere rests in secrecy and silence.

My work is a "prophetic" message to our times, a religious revelatory work. An academic seal would put it on an intellectual and consequently lower plane.

I have indeed undertaken what I believe to be a pioneer work. I cannot give my patronage to any particular system. I can bestow it only on Truth, which is unique and systemless.

I have embodied in these pages the matured wisdom and dearly bought experience of many many lifetimes.

I am only a generator of ideas, not a disseminator of them. My work is to inspire and direct others in private, that they might serve humanity spiritually in public.

I wish no organized institution to be founded upon my name and writing. It is not the logical outcome of all my work.

I have not only refused to organize a cult but have prevented others from doing so who wished it ardently.

I do not seek to spread any new or foreign doctrine. I do not want disciples. I do not want people to depend on any person or organization. I would like, instead, to help people discover the master and guide in the depths of their Being.

Let them remember that the Truth comes not from any person but from the Holy Spirit. It is from such a source that what is worthy in my writings has come; the errors however are mine. Let them therefore describe themselves as students of philosophy, not as followers of Brunton.

I can work in no other way than the one which befits my temperament. I must spread the truth in an unorganized way and let it take root in the individual hearer of it.

those of us who have planted our feet on the grander path that shall lead one day to ultimate wisdom, have to go on—whether it be through sorrow or joy, weakness or strength, world-turmoil or world-peace. For us there is no turning back.

The dedication of my intellect and pen to the spreading of Light was the first act of my literary career. It certainly helped me, by preoccupying my working time with spiritual ideas; and perhaps it helped the world.

To the outside observer, my declining years have been dead ones, apparently spent in inactivity and futility. But this is only one side of the picture. For they have also been spent in a hidden activity on a higher plane, as much for my own spiritual growth as for the world's peace.

In these pages I have tried to tell how consciousness of God and how knowledge of God's value came to me.

I have written down what I have learned and discovered over the many years of my life; if these ideas are helpful to you, you are welcome to them—but do not make the mistake of calling me a guru. We must all learn to think for ourselves in the end, so these words, this philosophy, can only be a guide to your own work.

It was Ramana Maharshi of Arunachala who said, "You yourself are your own guru. Be that". As a writer I have been my own master. As a student of truth I ended as my own guru.

I am never really alone when writing but every now and then there rises before my mind's eye the vision of some man or woman whose whole life may take a new and nobler course because of a few paragraphs which flow lightly from this old pen of mine...

Rather than be the scribe of ephemeral fact let me, O Lord, be the scribe of eternal vision. Let me write down word-for-word those divine messages which come to me out of the ether.

It is not an exaggeration to say that sometimes I felt as if I were bringing humanity messages from another world. Starved souls have found nourishment in these pages that speak of the Overself. These writings have instructed some in the noble truths of philosophy and consoled others in the sad hours of affliction.

As this work went forward, I felt and knew some presence in myself that took a part in its making. If I were to say that these pages were written by me, there would be an uneasy feeling of untruth in me. If I were to say the contrary, there would be a sense of the absurd in such a statement. I leave the reader to make what he can of these paragraphs.

It is my long-sustained and well-tested belief that I have had certain revelations from a higher source. The revelations are mixed, some dealing with the world's fortunes and misfortunes but others dealing purely with the Overself's wisdom and workings. The source is beyond me and met only in the profundity of meditation. I cannot name it or describe it, so others may call it what they like, yet I am directly aware of it.

In this book I have considered myself to be a sensitive recording instrument, carefully and minutely registering the impressions received from these higher states of consciousness. They are messages brought from the infinite for the blessing and guidance of finite man. But he must recognize their value and esteem their source.

It is both my fate and my joy to labour to the last as a medium for this voice within me. I shall put down my pen only when I put down my life.

I wish therefore to put before readers the fundamentals of this hidden philosophy in concise form and plain phrasing, to substitute a brief bird's-eye view of the whole matter, which—though it may leave some stony places of thought difficult to climb over—will nevertheless put them in possession of the basic principles and provide them with an Ariadne's thread to guide them through the maze of life and its problems of reflection and of experience. Nay, even if I fail to do this but succeed only in kindling within them something of that love of Truth, that passionate quest for the meaning of all life, of all experience, and of all this wonderful world, I shall have accomplished enough to justify our coming together in these pages.