

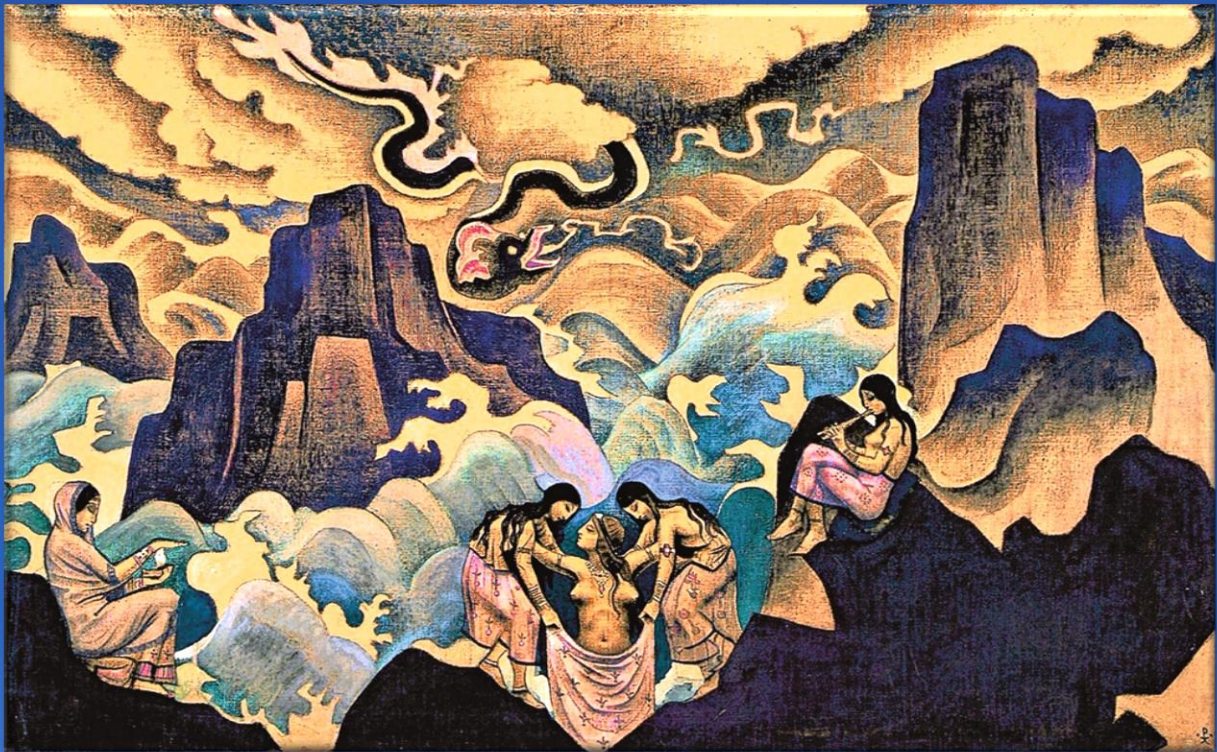


LEOBRAND

Letters on

Living Ethics

Introduction to Agni Yoga



11. Death and Rebirth

Table of contents

1. The Death – No End	3
2. The man and his Being.....	3
3. The three states of Being	5
4. The Moment of Dying	6
5. The transition into the astral or subtle world	7
6. The transition to the mental or fiery world	8
7. The rightful place in the hereafter	10
8. The preparations for rebirth.....	10
9. Five groups of humans	12
10. Is there a transmigration of souls?	12
11. What do the opponents of the doctrine of reincarnation say?	13
12. Where do the many reborn souls come from?	14
13. Are there memories of previous lives?.....	15

Cover picture: „*The mystery of birth*“, painting by Nicholas Roerich 1924.

Death and Rebirth

1. The Death – No End

Just as death is followed by birth into a new (subtle) life, so physical birth is preceded by dying in the subtle world. This requires, firstly, the existence of an immortal entity in the human being, which emerges from the physical body at the moment of dying, and secondly, it presupposes the existence of a subtle world in which the immortal entity of the human being finds a new home after physical death.

The freedom of decision granted to the immortal human individual and the cosmic responsibility this entails force the evolving individual spirit to return to the material or gross material world in each case. In the physical world the causes were triggered and therefore the effects must also be received there until the karmic cobweb is unravelled and the human being has fulfilled all his life's tasks. That is, until he has succeeded in transmuting the baser soul qualities into higher, God-like ones. The spiral course of evolution finds a certain conclusion on earth only as soon as the earthly school of life has been successfully completed. We must therefore return to the physical world until we have assimilated the animal-soul energies and transmuted them into higher spirit-soul ones. Therein lies the deeper meaning of human evolution. No mortal can escape this fate. The path is arduous, for it leads only through sorrowful experiences to the high goal where divine joys and radiant bliss await us.

Death is thus not an end, but it signifies the return of the soul to its original home, whereby only the physical garment, our visible body, must be discarded, since this cannot be taken with us into the ethereal world. Those who see in dying a return to their true home are also not afraid of death at all, indeed they will even step joyfully over the threshold of hereafter and die consciously. This dying is much easier than, conversely, leaving the ethereal home and taking birth on the physical plane. Only for the ignorant is dying difficult, the knowing knows no fear of death.

2. The man and his Being

Now, what is the immortal in the human being that outlasts death and causes him to be born again on the physical plan of existence according to the laws of nature? This immortal something is not the bodily soul and is not identical with the various soul bodies of a subtle and invisible fiery nature (astral and mental bodies), nor is it the fluidic or etheric body, but the "I" or "Ego" (Latin) as the messenger of the divine Monad, which sends a spark of spirit, the "I", which in turn requires a soul to live in the subtle realms. The soul, on the other hand, needs the physical body on the material plane, which comes to us as a personality. All three together, namely ego, soul and personality, make up the whole human being.

And of this human trinity, only the ego is immortal: for it is the imperishable divine spark of spirit which, enriched with invaluable experience gained in the work of the earthly plan, finally, after passing through all the races, returns to the divine home and enters Nirvana. The spark of spirit or the seed of spirit was "breathed out in order to assimilate the lower soul forces, which are caused by the constant explosion of matter, and to ennoble and spiritualize them on the way up the upward spiral of internalization.

The soul, as an instrument of the spark of spirit is just as mortal as the physical body, that is, its various astral and mental parts are returned to the matter of the realm from which they were taken. This may serve as a reassurance to those who stubbornly cling to the all too literal interpretation of the Christian Bible, that there is nothing in it to be found of an immortality of the soul. Unfortunately, they know nothing of a divine spark of spirit in human beings and therefore reject the immortality of a higher spiritual entity. In doing so, they make life a pointless trap. The same is done by the short-sighted materialists, who cannot deny the soul itself, because its sensations, pains, sensory perceptions, feelings, thoughts, etc. are simply irrefutably there. Experiments can be carried out with them but just like the anatomists they are at a loss when it comes to the problem of the soul and yet they cannot determine the location of the soul because it simply cannot be detected with the dissecting knife and the microscope. But why do almost all arm and leg amputees still have phantom pains in their severed limbs, right down to their fingertips and toes?

Science has long been tempted to place the seat of the soul into the brain, where the centre of the intellectual mind is located. Also, occultists who have strayed from the true path have subscribed to this theory (Rudolf Steiner). However, the brain is only an apparatus that transmits the thoughts of the mental body to the physical organs for execution. Man thinks with the mental body and feels by means of the astral. Thoughts are thus subtle forces and by no means only the result of a physical thinking process. For thinking and feeling itself, the brain is in itself not necessary, it merely serves to transmit to the receiving and executing physical body, like a radio set transmitting the music or words of a transmitter.

There was a time when the world of letters, as the "epitome of wisdom", enthusiastically trumpeted the scientific phrase: "No phosphorus, no thought". Certainly, a certain amount of phosphorus must be present in the brain in order for it to function, just as a machine requires a certain amount of lubricating oil and the radio requires electric current. But the fact that the quality of thoughts does not depend on the quantity of phosphorus is proven by the fact alone that the donkey and the goose have the most phosphorus in their brains of all living creatures.

Moreover, brain cells renew themselves every seven years, just as often as the rest of the somatic cells. A seventy-year-old has therefore already renewed his brain cells many times, and yet it is often precisely the memories of youth that are still most vividly preserved. Even in this process, consciousness of self is not lost, and man can even think, observe, feel and sense without a brain, namely when he temporarily leaves the physical body with the astral and mental body, which is the case in sleep and similar states.

The human being appears as a visible physical personality, but spiritual and mental forces dwell in him, directing, guiding and leading him. Their headquarters are in the so-called heart chakra and not in the brain. The mental energies are summarised under the term "soul", the higher spiritual ones are called "I" or "ego". In the latter, experiences, abilities, life wisdom and character traits are stored up in their own clothing of consciousness - the causal body - whereby the preservation of human individuality from life to life is ensured.

In the human being, two energies struggle as an expression of his bipolarity: the material, earthbound nature of lower animal-psychic forces and the spirit-bound divine energies. At the top of the latter is the ego as light energy or divine spark of spirit, which can be small or large depending on the striving in the sense of spiritual perfection. The ego itself is immortal and constructs the appropriate bodies for the different planes of existence from the matter of the relevant spheres: for the mental or fiery plane the mental body, for the astral or subtle world the astral body and for the physical world an etheric or fluid body, which serves as a matrix or model for the physical body and at the same time possesses the creative powers that enable it to enliven the physical body in the womb and to further develop and shape it after birth. Procreation itself is a fiery act and directly initiates the bio-logical process of incarnation.

3. The three states of Being

The human being lives and reveals his activity on three planes of existence, on the physical by means of his deeds, on the astral through his desires and feelings and on the mental by means of his thoughts. For each of these planes a body is also necessary, or rather, a bearer of consciousness from the matter of the corresponding sphere, which at the same time serves him as a means for the knowledge of this plane and for intercourse in it.

The imperishable Trinity/triad (spiritual soul) Δ

Sanskrit name	Esoteric label	Equivalent
ATMA	Monad, seed of the spirit, seed	Unit of consciousness with the absolute
Buddhi	Higher self, ego, core	Intuition, emotional, straight-knowledge, spiritual mind
Manas	Mental or thinking body	Intellect or intellectual mind

The lower fourness (body soul) \square

Kama Rupa	Animal soul, desire body, Lower Self	Instinct or instinctive mind
Linga Scharira	Astral body	Subtle body
Prana	Etheric body, life principle, fluidic double, vital principle	Vital principle
Schtula Scharira	Physical body	Physical body

Accordingly, every human being possesses a visible physical body with its emotional perceptions or five senses in order to recognise the visible-physical world and to communicate with it. Furthermore, he has an invisible astral body and an invisible mental body as well as organs of emotional perception from the matter of these planes for the acquisition of experiences in these worlds.

In order to facilitate an understanding of the manner in which the various human bodies can be accommodated in the physical body, let the following example serve. Imagine a vessel filled with sand. We can still pour water into this vessel, which will fill the empty spaces. We can also pump air into it and add ethereal fragrances to the water.

In one and the same vessel there can be three kinds of matter which penetrate each other and yet do not impede each other. The living creatures of the micro-world, which are found not only in the solid body but also in water and air, will continue their lives without perceiving the presence of the microbes found in the other matter. All these beings, in fact, belong to other forms of existence of different worlds, each of which possesses a different life with its own laws. If we had an even finer matter, we could continue to fill the same vessel with it and make the same observations.

The penetration of the physical world with the subtle levels of the cosmos is to be understood in the same way. These spheres are not somewhere far away from us, but are with us and we live into them. One cannot claim that they exist somewhere outside of us, but to put it correctly: within each other and again within each other. They differ from each other only in the number of vibrations or in the number of vibrations of the particles of matter that make up each plane. Penetration into a higher plane is therefore only possible if one adapts and equates the number of vibrations of one's body to the vibrations of the plane in question.

In the same way, the different bodies of the human being penetrate each other. If someone does not perceive the existence of these bodies, other than the physical one, it is only because he knows nothing at all about them. With the help of our consciousness we can take

possession of all these bodies and then have the opportunity to live consciously in the higher worlds. The development of consciousness in this direction is necessary, because every first step towards an achievement shapes a conscious relationship to it.

People who have reached a very high level of spiritual development can consciously leave not only their physical body but even the astral with their ego and mental body and participate in the life of higher worlds. They will then return to their bodies left behind and remember what happened to them. Unevolved people, on the other hand, leave their physical body only when they are asleep, and when they have returned to it, they have almost no memory of it.

4. The Moment of Dying

„One should be very solicitous about the last hours of sojourn on Earth. Often the final striving can predetermine the succeeding life, also the stratum in which the spirit will dwell. Indeed, it is inadmissible to recall the spirit into the earthly spheres when it already has broken away. Tissues which already have been freed from earthly attractions must be strained in a terrific effort in order again to be assimilated into the earthly atmosphere. People should learn to think during someone’s departure, as well as during birth, and should be able to ease the processes. As delays are harmful during birth, they are likewise harmful during death. The subtle formation of the new body must be taken into consideration. Wounds caused the departing one must be cured in the Subtle World. A most cruel treatment of the departing ones is often manifested. It may be said that it is not death which torments, but living people. All who are approaching the Fiery Teaching must know about this. On the path to the Fiery World let us remember the law of affirming the last minutes of the crossing.“ (FW III, § 97.)

It is a widespread belief among Indians that the future state of man at his reincarnation and birth corresponds to the desire that was most dear to his heart when he died. But this wish is not a spontaneous thought or a sudden whim, but the result of the inclinations of the heart that filled man throughout his life, as well as the desires and passions that dominated him.

In order to be able to focus all our thinking on a higher ideal at the hour of death and to be able to cling to it with all our heart, the love for this ideal must have been established in us beforehand, otherwise it cannot emerge at the hour of death. It is therefore very important that we learn to love the higher and renounce the lower while we are still alive, because what fills our soul when we die can be of great significance for our progress or regression. A hypocritical conversion, prompted only by the fear of death, is of no use at all. After all, the last thoughts and ideas of the dying person occur quite arbitrarily and are a reflection of those thoughts that occupied the person most during his life.

„For a consciously developed spirit, the sojourn on the astral plane could be limited to a span of forty days, but various earthly conditions have turned this stay into an interminable period. The hapless regret of those carried away from the earthly world bind them to it.

This is best illustrated by what happened in the story of Lot. For the sake of a new life, Lot’s family left the city with only one condition imposed on them, not to look back. But Lot’s wife looked back—and bound herself to the earth.

Religion says: He who goes to the fathers will dwell with them; he who goes to the angels will dwell with them; and he who goes to God will dwell with Him. It means that a person who sets himself the maximum degree of motion will arrive at the best attainment. So the best farewell for someone leaving the earthly world will be, “Hurry onward without looking back.” (LMG II, § 225)

“A letter from Mahatma Koot Hoomi states: „... The experience of dying men—by drowning and other accidents—brought back to life, has corroborated our doctrine in almost every case. Such thoughts are involuntary and we have no more control over them than we would over the eye’s retina to prevent it perceiving that colour which affects it most. At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain’s activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest naturally becomes the most vivid and survives so to say all the rest which now vanish and disappear for ever, to reappear



Koot Hoomi

Drawing by Hermann Schmiechen 1884

but in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious—as some physiologists assert. Even a madman, or one in a fit of delirium tremens¹ will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body—the brain thinks and the Ego lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future².” (Mahatma Letters, Letter No. 23b)

5. The transition into the astral or subtle world

Death is the final separation of the fluidic double and the astral and mental bodies from the physical body. The physical body is disembodied as its master - the spirit - leaves it with its instruments and servants.

As soon as the etheric body or fluidic double has departed, the body immediately begins to decompose. The etheric body is still often seen by clairvoyant people in cemeteries, during the first days after the funeral. Ignorant people erroneously think it is the soul of the deceased or call it a spectre. Yet this fluidic double is nothing more than a harmless shadow of the physical body, which very soon disperses into the etheric realm without leaving any memories or manifestations.

After liberation from the physical body and the double, the human being with the remaining bodies enters the ethereal or astral world, which was previously hidden from him, but now becomes just as real and visible as the physical world before. Here the human being is still in possession of all his organs of feeling and immediately takes part in the new life, only with the difference that in the astral world desires of a purely physical nature, such as eating, drinking and other needs, are unfulfillable because the tool, namely the physical body, for their satisfaction is missing.

Those who take their old passions with them into the astral world will suffer greatly because they cannot satisfy them. The ethereal plane therefore becomes a veritable hell for him, similar to what Dante described as the Inferno in the "The Divine Comedy". It must also be said that when a human being crosses over, he is not suddenly omniscient, but only knows what he has been brought over and instantly sees, or learns from there and can describe.

The astral world and the astral body are the mediators between the physical and the mental world. However, the abiding in the astral world is very different. It can be limited to several days and weeks, but it can also extend to years, even centuries and millennia. That depends entirely on the human being himself.

Of course, when the dying person enters the astral world, they are received by friends of their own kind. Usually even the parents, if they have been dead for a long time, will be present to receive the newcomer. But one should not rely on this. It is therefore important to familiarise oneself with the problems of the ethereal world already in earthly life, so that the consciousness is prepared for the different conditions and can find its own way. The previous teachings of the

¹ *Delirium tremens* – Drunken delusion, clouding of consciousness with delusions due to chronic alcohol abuse.

² A reminder that in today's "culture" is almost always disregarded, even through artificial life extension.

church offer no useful clues in this respect. For heaven, purgatory and hell do not exist in the form described, and entry into the world beyond does not depend on the grace or disgrace of the theologians, but on one's own endeavours.

„...People who have surrounded themselves with darkness will cross over into the Subtle World in darkness. Fiery glimpses are so insignificant to them, and the desire for ascent so unimportant, that Light remains inaccessible. So they walk about in darkness, fighting against the Light.“ (FW I, § 497.)

„...Upon entering the Subtle World one should firmly bear in mind the resolution to go toward Light, to hasten to self-perfection, and for this each advice is extremely important. If here upon Earth we already approach discrimination, then upon crossing into the Subtle World this achievement will be a benefaction. The principal difficulty is that despair and perplexity hinder the assimilation of the new conditions. But if we remember firmly whither and wherefore we go, we will instantly find many helpers. Yet people are especially disconcerted by the absence of secrecy when the Ineffable Light penetrates all that exists. Blessed are those who do not have to be ashamed of their heart's accumulations. Love everything that can uplift the heart.“ (FW I, § 660.)

„ It is a natural desire to want to know how the transitions into different spheres are accomplished. It is not difficult to understand that purified Agni (Fire of Spirit) is the decisive factor. If we gradually fill a balloon with combustible gas, it will begin to rise proportionately. If the balloon cannot retain the gas it will descend. This is a crude example of the principle governing transition into the various spheres of the Subtle World. The subtle entity can ascend by itself if its fiery seed is appropriately filled. Fire—the transmuter—helps to assimilate the new and higher conditions. Agni facilitates the understanding of the language of each sphere, because the intercourse of beings becomes more refined as the ascent is made. Of course, the high Guidance does not forsake the striving ones, but for assimilation of Guidance devotion is needed. Thus, a being can ascend the ladder—there is no other symbol which can more accurately define the ascent of the spirit. If a being is detained on one step, the cause is apparent in the aura. So many travelers quite unexpectedly find themselves a few steps lower! The usual reason for such retrogression is some earthly remembrance which engenders cravings. The Guide considers a store of patience indispensable to protect those who stumble. But one should not draw too frequently upon this precious energy. The being who can discover the cause by himself will actually ascend more quickly. Truly, ascent is accompanied by the joy of new companions, and finally the earthly asp of envy falls away, and thought-creativity is no longer impeded by the currents of malice. But one should prepare even now for mobility of consciousness. A torpid consciousness obstructs the striving of Agni. Thus, let us envision perfectly clearly the ladder of ascent.“ (FW I, § 621.)

6. The transition to the mental or fiery world

Even in the astral world, there comes a time for every human being when he has to leave this ethereal realm with its extraordinary possibilities for the purpose of ascending to the higher, mental or fiery world - the home of the spirit. This means a new dying in the astral world, caused by the discarding of the astral body.

„...The higher up, the more pleasant the stay; and when it reaches the border of the mental plane the spirit can rest, because there it is already subject to the attractive force of the loftier spheres. But one should consciously bypass the lower strata. It is necessary that the explosive burst of consciousness be able to propel the kernel of the spirit as far as possible. That is why the moment of transition is so important, for it allows the spirit to transport itself to the higher strata. Once the spirit hooks on to the lower strata, it is very difficult for it to rise further. ...“ (LMG II, § 225.)

The transition to the mental world is subject to the same laws of evolution as in the first case, i.e. when man has thrown off the last garment he wore, his astral body, he finds himself in the lowest plane of the mental world, for which he has his own body, built up of the corresponding mental matter and possessing more or less developed organs of receptivity to this world. These in turn are dependent on the general, cultural and spiritual development of the human being. The astral body, from which man has now freed himself and which he has returned to astral matter, does not dissolve immediately, similar to the physical body. Just as the latter is buried in the earth or can be cremated, the astral body also continues to exist as a corpse for some time, retains a certain part of the consciousness of the human being until it is

completely dissolved, and leads a semi-conscious existence for a time. These discarded astral shells are strongly attracted by the thoughts of relatives and friends who are left behind. Through their memories and conversations about past lives in the physical world, they are also drawn to the places of activity of their earlier earthly existence. They often appear in the spiritualistic séances and are mistaken for the souls of the departed. They can only explain or answer of the questions addressed to them what they have known in the course of their earthly life. Therefore, they also know little that is sensible about the conditions of the world beyond, with the exception of those souls who also have been consciously dwelling in the astral world with the ego and the mental body and have a higher knowledge. The spirit of a deceased person who has already shed the astral sheath and entered the mental or fiery world will rarely appear without a higher commission, and never, at the instigation of inexperienced laymen who have gathered at the séances to pastime or out of curiosity. If such cases seem to occur, they are personifiers, that is, impostors who are not afraid to imitate historical figures, even Christ or other masters of wisdom. The knowledge transmitted in this way does not go beyond what is already known and does not stand up to any scrutiny.

A sleep gradually overtakes the dying astral sheath, and the particles of matter composing the shadowy body thereby lose the principle which balls them together and disperse in space.

The same phenomena and transformations also take place with the next body, which consists of matter of the lowest mental plane. After

man has freed himself from the confining shell, he enters the region of the higher mental plane, which is called paradise or heaven in all creeds. The last body he possesses here is called the "immortal body" or "causal body" (causa - Lat. = cause), and that is why, in this body the higher mental consciousness with the free will, the character traits, the experiences and the abilities is preserved and is no longer subject to destruction and decomposition. In this higher mental matter the immortal ego, the individual human spirit, dwells and waits, but never idly, until the hour of rebirth into the material world has come for it.

Apart from the various shells in which the human spirit is concealed, the human being still possesses a special, imperishable charisma, a spiritual garment, which is called an aura. It envelops the whole human being in an ovoid egg shape. As spirituality increases, the sun aura gradually forms, the so-called halo, which surrounds the brain centres. The aura is directly dependent on the level of spiritual development of the human being. The more highly



„Ascent of the Blessed“ by Hieronymus Bosch

developed the human spirit, the larger the aura and the richer and more splendid are its colours. (For more details see lesson 5)

7. The rightful place in the hereafter

„Therefore I cannot agree with the statement that after death and passing into the Subtle World people will immediately find their satisfaction, happiness, and the whole meaning of all they sought on Earth. This would be contradictory to the basic cosmic law just mentioned. Undoubtedly, those who sincerely seek for the meaning of earthly existence and who strive after the highest ideals will find them there, in full accordance with their striving and thoughts. There is no scale of justice more precise than that which man carries within himself; for his own aura, which is woven out of energies, motives, and thoughts, is that true scale. Precisely these energies carry his spirit to the level which he himself has built.

The Subtle, or astral world is the world of effects, therefore those thoughts and strivings that did not find application on Earth will do so there, because there the inner man lives and acts with all his feelings and strivings. But can one expect that a man sunk in crime and possessed of an animal mentality could find happiness and satisfaction there? Inasmuch as an effect is the exact development of a cause, how can an evil-minded murderer, a seducer, or an idiot experience a condition of well-being in the higher spheres, which would be unbearable for him owing to their subtle vibrations! And more than unbearable, for the very approach of a being from the higher spheres causes incredible pains to such as he; furthermore, from contact with the higher energies, he decomposes.“ (HIR II, 17. October 1935)

However, no one can serve the punishment for their deeds committed on earth in the Subtle World, and therefore everyone must return to earth until he has finished making amends for his negative deeds here.

8. The preparations for rebirth

The return to earth or the process of reincarnation takes place in the reverse order to disembodiment. The remaining immortal body or causal body, which consists of the matter of the higher rank of the mental plane, lowers itself at the behest of the spiritual grain - by virtue of cosmic law - to the lower mental plan as soon as the period of dwelling in the heavenly abodes has ended. The ego begins to surround itself with the matter of the lower mental plane and builds its new mental or thought body.

Once the mental body has been created, it descends together with the causal body of the ego into the astral plane, where the new astral body or the body of desires and feelings is built out of the astral matter, through which man can express his desires, passions and emotions.

In the same way, the fluidic double is formed from the matter of the physical plan. This is an exact model of the coming physical body or, in other words, its original, for it exists earlier than the physical body and is at the same time its formative power. This means that these subtle bodies do not all have to be fully formed at the time of conception, but can also still be subject to development, but must be ready at the time of birth. The etheric body is primarily required for the formation of the embryo, which is shaped by the biological inheritance of the parents during conception.

When all the shells described above have formed, the time of birth of the human being comes. A highly developed individuality that lives by means of the higher consciousness chooses the family in which it would like to be born, although spiritual as well as karmic relationships also play a role.

For less developed people, who do not believe in immortality and know nothing of the uninterruptedness of spiritual life, this question is decided by the lords of the law of karma or fate. These determine the family and the conditions into which the poorly developed ego must be born by taking into consideration the desires and aspirations that man revealed in his previous life. Thus, on the basis of their higher knowledge, they consider the karmic consequences to be lived out by the reincarnate in the life to come, because they can foresee and survey the favourable conditions.

„Soulless beings are known to all. This is not a figure of speech but a chemical reality. It may be asked, Do these people incarnate in this deplorable state? The question indicates ignorance of the fundamentals. No one can be incarnated without a store of fiery energy. Without the torch of Agni, no one enters the physical world. The squandering of Agni takes place here, amidst all the wonders of nature. To dissipate Agni it is not at all necessary to commit any violent crimes. From various Teachings we know enough about even the reformation of robbers. Ordinarily the dissipation of Agni occurs in everyday life when the spirit slumbers. The accumulation of Agni is arrested by trivial actions. It must be understood that the benefaction of Agni grows naturally, but when darkness blankets the process of perfectment, then the Fire imperceptibly—though it can be chemically proven—departs from the worthless receptacle. Beautiful is the law of eternal motion, either evolution or involution. Beautiful is the law that permits each incarnate being to have within him eternal Agni, as a Light in the darkness. Beautiful is the law that, even in spite of karma, issues Light to each wayfarer. Beautiful is the law that does not prevent the growth of the fiery garden within one, even from the age of seven. Though these first blossoms be small, though they bloom in very small thoughts, they will be a true inception of the future trend of thought. What a multitude of beautiful thoughts are born in the heart of a seven-year-old when the dim images of the Subtle World have not as yet disappeared from the brain and the heart! Dissipation may also begin then if the soil of the plant proves to be rotten. In case of such depletion it is possible to help much, or, as it was said long ago, to “lend Fire.” This lending takes place also in the very smallest actions. Thus, already thrice have I reminded about crumbs. From these sparks grow huge fires.“ (FW I, § 183.)

„It is difficult to turn from Earth to the Fiery World. But it is equally difficult to approach the earthly spheres from the Subtle World. Such plunges may be compared to the work of divers. As the diver must wear a heavy diver’s suit in order to resist the pressure of the ocean, so he who approaches Earth must also sheathe himself in a dense body. The state of the newborn babe is wisely designed, because it can thus gradually assume the burdens of Earth. More than one period of seven years is necessary to master earthly existence. Therefore one should carefully protect the children.“ (FW I, § 338.)

„...The spirit is connected with the embryo at the moment of conception. It begins to enter in the beginning of the fourth month when the first nerve and brain channels are being formed. The formation of the vertebral column brings in the next degree of possession of the body. Wonderful is the moment of birth, when the consciousness of the spirit flashes up brightly and then blends with matter. There are even cases when words are pronounced at birth. The final possession of the body takes place at the seventh year of a child’s life.” It is also said, “Even as hunger directs toward food, so the spirit is directed toward incarnation, as only matter can give the new impulses. ‘ ...’” (HIR I, 19. June 1933)

The physical body or the body of the deed is given to man by his parents, also the characteristic qualities of the race and people in which man is to be born anew. Therein lies the only genetic constitution which is inherited from the parents. Children are never the spiritual product of their parents. The individual spirit of the new earth citizen existed long before conception and was only waiting for a favourable moment for rebirth.

The individuality of each human being has been developed in the course of eons through repeated incarnations. All abilities, qualities, knowledge and character are the result of the accumulations of previous incarnations. A repetition of lives on earth takes place so that the individuality can be perfected and the accumulations in the chalice can be increased. This is the task of life on earth and the purpose of re-embodiment.

The differences in abilities observed in people are the result of various efforts lead to a lesser or greater maturity of the individuality. But they are also the result of a longer or shorter stay in the celestial regions; in the first place they depend on whether the time was used for learning or wasted.

How long can a human being stay in the subtle and fiery world? We get the following information about this in the book “Agni Yoga”:

„If someone insists that incarnations are always three thousand years apart, he will be as correct as the one who claims that they are three months apart. ... If, in the second race, a far-distant date was needed for incarnation, in the sixth race the coming together of physical and astral conditions reduces the need for such lengthy periods between incarnations.“ (AY, § 333.)

9. Five groups of humans

The LIVING ETHICS divides mankind into five different groups according to their development. The first group includes the very rare flowers of humanity who have already completed their earthly evolution and reached the God-human state. These are the true adepts or masters of wisdom, also known in Indian as great souls or mahatmas. They are the guides of all those who strive for the light of truth and realisation. They also no longer require reincarnation and only return to earth at their own request if they intend to fulfil a very special task for the good of humanity and for the purpose of further evolution.

The second group consists of those who have realised the necessity of perfection and consciously shape their future. They already voluntarily renounce earthly pleasures (what is commonly referred to as such), although they could utilise their abilities for this purpose better than others, but in order to accelerate their evolution they renounce them. Often they even reincarnate immediately after death without casting off their old astral and mental shell, which is possible in order to save time. Each of them is on the "path of spirit" and is invisibly guided by a master of wisdom, who also selects the family and the conditions that his disciple needs in order to fulfil the task he has undertaken.

The third group represents cultural people. These are egos that strive towards high ideals. They pursue some high goal, and their field of vision expands to understand the nature of life and the interrelationships in the universe. They incarnate several times in each sub-race and the interval between their incarnations varies greatly, but is usually long, longer than 700 years.

The fourth group are people with a limited worldview. Their horizons do not extend beyond the boundaries of family, school, parental home and nation. These people made up the majority of the world's population. Their minds are usually lacking in initiative and understanding of the higher values of life, which is why they are addicted to the world of pleasure. These people have to incarnate more than seven times in each subrace as they gain little experience. Therefore, they only have a short rest in the heavenly regions.

The fifth group is made up of completely undeveloped people. Their souls have risen from the animal state not so long ago, but not their spiritual ego. As with all humans, this came from a divine creator who alone can take responsibility for the original creation of a human individual. The intellectual development of the fifth group is still in its early stages. The raging passions and the predominantly animal nature are very difficult to tame. These people incarnate primarily among the savage and semi-civilised races as well as in the backward criminal types of the civilised world. It is inevitable that, they must incarnate repeatedly in one and the same sub-race with only small temporal interruptions due to a low accumulation of life experience. This is the reason why the lower races and primitive people generally have the greatest fertility, as they have to absorb the undeveloped souls. They also populate the lowest regions of the astral plan, and only through strict discipline and arduous teaching can they be helped on their way. However, like all other human beings, they possess the right of spiritual ascent and self-perfection, because before God there are no racial differences, only older and younger souls, or more or less developed egos.

10. Is there a transmigration of souls?

Over the millennia, various erroneous ideas have accumulated around the doctrine of reincarnation, which have obscured the truth. One of these great errors is the belief in the so-called transmigration of souls. This states that the human spirit comes from an animal or a plant and also returns to it. However, our spirit has never evolved from an animal or a plant, although animals and plants also possess an astral soul and inhabit the astral realm for a certain time, but never the mental or fiery realm, because they lack the necessary intellectual apparatus, namely the fifth principle or "Manas", nor does the human spirit return to an animal or even a plant, because that would mean the complete annihilation of individuality. Humans only have the four lower principles in common with animals (see lesson 5 "The might and meaning of thought"). However, in order to live in matter, he needs an animal body or a body related to the animal.

The great difference, however, lies in the fact, that the human being has also absorbed the divine triad - the fifth to seventh principles - namely Manas, Buddhi and Atma, and spirit and matter are united in him for the first time, which is not the case in the animal. After death, the soul of the animal returns to the resonance soul of its species, into which it brings the experiences it has gained in life. All individuality is thus completely extinguished. From this common reservoir, all newborn animals of a species bring with them the experiences they have acquired together, and so there is no individual resurrection for either the animal or the plant. Only the human being enjoys this privilege as a creature of the fifth kingdom of nature.

It is true that physical man has progressed in his development through the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms. However, the "missing link" between animal and human will never be found, because this form already existed in the previous rounds. Consequently, their remains no longer exist because they have completely perished. All the animal souls present in today's humans originate from earlier rounds. In the current round, humans were created by divine beings, MANUS - or Great Masters - incarnated voluntarily and created the archetypes of the various races. However, they needed material for this, which they found in the animal kingdom. Every master builder and even a god can create nothing from nothing. The animal souls from other planets, which had developed in the previous rounds up to the border of the human kingdom, served as building material, and whose energies we have to assimilate and transmute today.

The highly evolved animals that are our younger comrades and servants today and whose bodies we eat, nonsensically and without any compelling necessity, out of self-love, will no longer become human beings on our planet in this round, because they would have to wait too long. However, many of them have already developed certain qualities, such as loyalty, decency, love, etc., more than many humans. They will therefore make the transition to the fifth kingdom of nature on another, more suitable planet.

If a human being, i.e. his ego, were to incarnate in an animal, he would have to give up his individuality. However, this would be a total regression in evolution, which does not exist without obvious necessity. For this reason, the belief in a transmigration of souls from humans back to animals is an absurdity.

Although the loss of individuality is possible, it is a rare occurrence and an extremely painful process. Only those who have persistently violated the laws of evolution for a long time end up in the category of so-called "failed creation", for which special laws exist. Then he loses his individuality and can become an animal. The ego leaves the soul without having achieved anything and must continue its evolution on another planet.

The decomposition of individual mental energies is so painful that it surpasses the myths of hell. Just as a person who transgresses the laws in civil life can lose his freedom and even his life, so it is in cosmic life. The transgression of cosmic laws can have terrible consequences, the most painful of which is the total annihilation of individuality. But such a process would be the return of man to the animal. No human being will therefore normally transform back into or take possession of a dog, cat or horse. However, the latter sometimes occurs in so-called vampirism. There are passionate people who still want to participate in physical life after death, especially if they were torn from life too early without their life impulse having ended.

They then try to absorb the life force of people with a mediumistic disposition, i.e. people who are easily accessible to them. In some cases, they also succeed in taking possession, which leads to possession. Very low vampires even enter the bodies of animals. This is often the case with executed murderers, but also to suicides. This does not mean that they all enter animals in order to be able to participate in life again, but the danger exists. Therefore, suicide and the death penalty should be strictly rejected, since the murderer can still cause a great deal of harm in the afterlife, and from there also on earth. Therefore, he should be isolated from human society in order to give him a suitable opportunity to improve.

11. What do the opponents of the doctrine of reincarnation say?

Opponents of the doctrine of reincarnation put forward the following arguments:

1. Why can people no longer remember anything? 2. Nobody has ever returned from the afterlife. Only a person with a high level of spiritual development has the possibility of remembering their previous lives. All experiences and memories of previous existences are stored in the spiritual

"centre of the chalice", the so-called "Anahata chakra", which is located on the right side of the chest and forms a triangle with the heart chakra and the solar plexus. As long as this centre of higher consciousness is closed, people can never know anything about their previous incarnations because the gross material of brain cannot absorb the high vibrations of the "chalice", just as the human ear can no longer perceive very high tones with more than 16,000 vibrations/sec. Quite apart from this, the present brain has not experienced the previous lives either. Moreover, it is a blessing for all people of spiritual average that the night of oblivion is descending over the past. None of them would be able to bear the burden of remembering all their deeds and misdeeds.

This also gives us the answer to the second question. If the normal average person could absorb the high vibrations of the "chalice" with his gross brain, he would be able to remember his past lives and would never claim that no one had ever returned from the hereafter, whether we know and admit this or not. However, the ignorant demand solid evidence. These have already been repeatedly provided, but are rejected because they have not been minutely and certified by at least twenty scholars.

A catholic priest raised the following objection to reincarnation:

It would be easy if you could always return to life, you wouldn't have to make any more effort. As if Catholics were particularly concerned about self-perfection. Exactly the opposite can be observed, especially in the area of tolerance. The remission of sins tempts people to licentiousness and irresponsibility, whereas the belief in rebirth and karma leads to self-responsibility and self-perfection. It would also be illogical to expect a student to stop learning because he knows that he can stay seated anyway. The more endeavouring a person is, the quicker their ascent will be. The opponents truly no longer know what nonsensical arguments they should put forward against rebirth. It would be easy if a person only had to step into a confessional to be absolved of their sins and be able to go to heaven at any time without having to make amends.

12. Where do the many reborn souls come from?

Many sceptics ask themselves the same question in view of the earth's ever-increasing population. The answer is quite simple. There are currently around 25 billion souls bound to our planet who have to participate in its evolutionary development in the current round. With a population of 3.5 billion, only 14% of this gigantic reservoir has been utilised, which means that each soul can only incarnate at intervals of around 500 to 700 years on average for the time being, assuming that the average human age is 50 to 70 years. A duration of stay of around 600 years³ also corresponds to the average stay in the world beyond.

In earlier times, fewer people were incarnated because the average age was only 20-30 years due to the high infant mortality rate and the lack of medical progress and unfavourable living conditions. At that time, the earth's population was also two to three times smaller. Today, the average life expectancy in highly civilised countries has already risen to 70 years. However, if the average human age were to increase twice or three times, the possibility of incarnating every 700 years on average would be postponed to 1400 or 2100 years, respectively, with the population remaining the same, thereby causing an inappropriate slowdown in human evolution. As the average age increases, the earth's population increases in the same proportion. Today, an acceleration of evolution has occurred, which requires an accelerated development especially for the remaining remnants of the third (dark-skinned) and fourth (Chinese, Japanese, etc.) root races, which is why the yellow and the remaining black sub-races in particular have to multiply rapidly today in order to be able to ascend to the fifth root race, whose highly developed souls are already waiting for the formation of the new, sixth root race. This will be shaped by MANU MORYA, the High Teacher and Master of the LIVING ETHICS in the coming millennia.

³ Data from the year 1955.

(Moreover, the term MANU is not unfamiliar to the Germans either, as the word "man" is derived from it, which in turn is derived from the Germanic Manu - Latin Manus - who was the founder of the Germanic tribes).

13. Are there memories of previous lives?

Even though most people are not able to recall the memories of previous lives, not everything has dwindled from a person's memory when they start their new life on earth. In the first years of life, many children are full of past memories. Sometimes they endeavour to tell strange things about themselves, which adults regard as fantasies and therefore attach no importance to them. Over time, however, these memories are completely covered up by the children's impressions of their new life. The ignorance of the grown-ups eradicates the knowledge of the little ones. This is the reason why a valuable opportunity is buried instead of being developed. The knowledge of the little ones is already being crushed again, who were prenatally trained for the new teaching based on their observations and are now being thrown back into the old path of ignorance.

However, one should not believe that only children have any conscious memories from previous lives. They can also be observed in adults, especially when people are placed in conditions that resemble their previous incarnations. If an association of ideas is added to this, the memory of events from previous lives that correspond to the present situation often returns.

When we meet people with whom we feel a spiritual kinship and sympathy from the first moment, but with others, even with parents and siblings, we can never maintain genuine friendly relations, despite repeated efforts, we see here again the effect of the law of reincarnation. We have already had friendly or familial relationships with the first people in previous lives, and we may have met the second for the first time or have had hostile relationships with them in previous lives. The feelings of sympathy and antipathy are retained in subsequent lives, in which they have a karmic effect.

There are truths of a higher degree which cannot yet be researched by today's science, but which nevertheless remain truth. In the case of rebirth, sceptics should therefore be told that scepticism is a sign of ignorance. There is countless evidence in favour of reincarnation. Humanity deprives itself of one of the most beautiful hopes if it does not believe in it. Only in this way can an absolutely equalising justice come into effect. We must not doubt that this exists, otherwise the whole of life with its immense diversity and multiplicity would have no meaning, and the earth would truly be the worst of the worlds, incapable of remedying the existing inequality and injustice among people. Only the belief in progressive perfection based on one's own efforts over the course of numerous incarnations can give people the strong hope that gives them the courage never to despair and to cross the threshold to the hereafter with a smile.

„... Actually it is not easy to know how to awaken the imagination of past incarnations; only a purified consciousness which is not confused by transition, manifests continuous imagination, ever new and untiring.“ (FW II, § 206.)

„...In order not to lose consciousness, the most important thing is to remember and strengthen throughout one's life the decision to maintain consciousness during the transition. This consciousness is the treasure which we carry along with us. ... The consciousness loses its earthly aspect, and can be transformed into spiritual knowledge. The clearer the earthly consciousness, the quicker the awakening of the spirit. ...“ (SMU II, § 304.)



Build a "Star"

Many responsible-minded and worried people today demand a practical action that promises maximum success without attracting much attention, without affiliation to a club or without political risk. In this way they live up to positive expression to their sense of responsibility towards the world situation. Working on the "Star" helps to alleviate not only spiritual but also material distress. It is therefore important to be concerned, at least a few times a day, sending out good thoughts, not for oneself, but above all for the world and for peace. Then the general mental work will also become accustomed to selfless aspirations, and there will be the hope that through such concentrated powers of thoughts the power of evil can be successfully reduced and averted. If millions of people voluntarily made themselves available to such a work, those men and women who would be fit for their purified thinking and noble character, could be able to protrude without great difficulty in religion, politics and social life in order to establish a fair and peaceful world order for the benefit of all people.

„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“

*Source of light in the universe,
pour out light into human thinking,
it become brighter on Earth!*

*Source of love in the universe,
pour out love into all human hearts,
May love blossom on Earth!*

*Source of wisdom in the universe,
pour out knowledge and wisdom,
let cognition prevail on Earth!*

*Source of peace in the universe,
strengthen peace and justice,
may felicity and joy be on Earth!*

*Source of power in the universe,
seal the door to evil,
that the plan of the good will be fulfilled!*

„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“

(For further information see Lesson no. 6).

Source:Works of the blessed Mahatma Maitreya Morya:

Blossoms of Morya`s Garden:

Abbreviations:

Leaves of Morya's Garden I, LMG I §§ 387**Leaves of Morya's Garden II,** LMG II §§ 358

New era:

COMMUNITY COM §§ 275

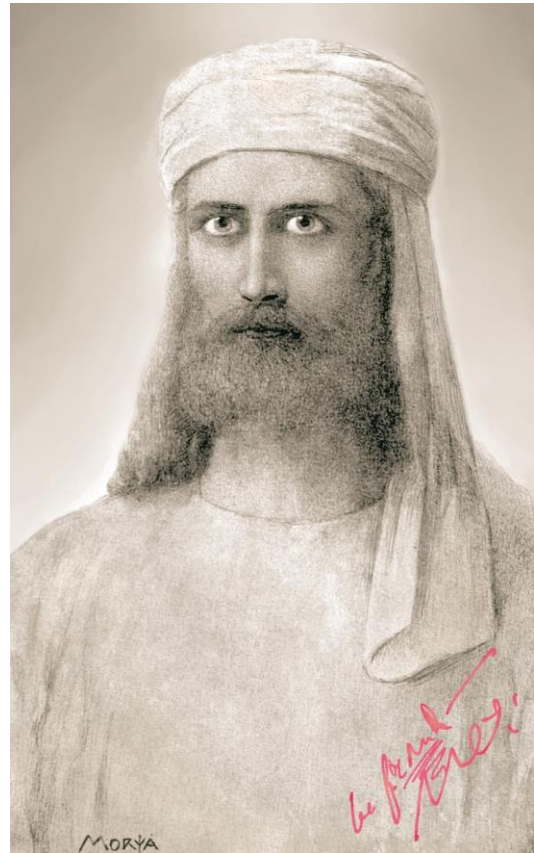
Doctrine of Living Ethics in seven themes:

AGNI YOGA AY §§ 670**INFINITY I** INF I §§ 400**INFINITY II** INF II §§ 518**HIERARCHY** HIE §§ 460**HEART** HEA §§ 600**FIERY WORLD I** FW I §§ 666**FIERY WORLD II** FW II §§ 470**FIERY WORLD III** FW III §§ 618**AUM** AUM §§ 600**BROTHERHOOD I** BR 1 §§ 610**BROTHERHOOD II** (2 parts) BR 2 §§ 955**Letters of Helena Ivanova Roerich**

2 Books: HIR I, HIR II

Letters of Mahatma

3 Books ML I, ML II, ML III



MORYA – Indian Rajput prince, whose spirit had been raptured to the great spirit of MAITREYA and was enlightened or overshadowed by him. This portrait drawing commissioned by the artist Hermann Schmiechen in 1884 was often repainted. However, the copies only achieved a resemblance to the "face of the teacher", which is why repainted copies can lead to failure in meditations!

Living Ethics shows the way of a rational self-education through applied ethics.



LEOBRAND – Leopold Brandstätter (* 20th February 1915 Wallern, † 26th February 1968 Linz), was an Austrian nature philosopher and humanist.

His writings are concerned with ethics, humanities, psychology, philosophy, politics, ideology of the world and architecture.

In the 1950s he translated the Agni yoga doctrine from Russian together with a Baltic-German team, thus paving the way for this philosophy in German-speaking countries.

Leobrand founded a (non public) school for Living Ethics. Decades before the introduction of teaching ethics in public schools he had already written 36 lessons of Living Ethics, as the first interdenominational teaching aid for ethical training. He gave countless lectures and conducted seminars. Recordings of Leobrand's lectures are available. These historical audio documents offer the possibility to understand/think along the philosophical analysis of the great thinker Leobrand and open up new horizons for life's spiritual dimension. Philosophical accuracy and clarity of expression are Leobrand's trademarks. The new concept of God is particularly noteworthy. For this new and completely independent concept of God, a new term was created: "UNIVERALO". Leobrand's concept is explained

on a hierarchical basis, it detaches itself from the abstract and merges with the whole existence. It includes many philosophical and historical concepts as well as advanced knowledge of relatively immortal spiritual fields of force. Leobrand therewith expressed the first and only humanistic definition of God within a new world-view and pulls the rug from under atheism. The new concept of God is as dynamic as nature itself and thus indicative of the forthcoming independent humanities.

Other highlights are his work for a united Europe and for a forthcoming pannational world union. Many of those great-sounding ideas of Leobrand are already self-evident reality.

Works:

1955 - 1961: 36 lessons, **Briefe über Lebendige Ethik** (*letters on Living Ethics* - in translation)

1957: **Psychische Energie** (*Psychic energy* - humanities and psychology)

1958: **Heilung durch psychische Energie** (*Healing by psychic energy* - humanities and health)

1966: **Freude** (*Joy* - philosophy)

1967: **Der Ausweg** (*The way out* - politics)

1968: **Neues Europa und Welt ABC** (*New europe and world ABC* - politics)

1968: **Das neue universelle Weltbild** (*The new universal world view* - world view)

1968: **Spiralik** (*Spiralik* - architecture of the future)

1953 - 1968: reprint, articles in magazines (partly unpublished manuscripts)

1976: **Der auferstandene Gott** (*The resurrected god* - humanities, compilation of articles)

1962 - 1967: **Lectures** and seminars on all his works (recordings MC in German language)

Activities:

1949: Establishment of a **peace league**

1953: Establishment of the (not public) „**School for Living Ethics**“ and magazine

1960: Publication of the magazine „**Spirale und grüne Wacht**“ (nature protection and biotechnology)

1961: Publication of the magazine „**Weltreichspirale**“

1962: Establishment of the association „**Welt-Spirale**“ - ethical society of progress and renewal of the world, and magazine.

© 1956 Leopold Brandstätter, the first edition was published in German by „Schule für Lebendige Ethik“ Verlag für Lebendige Ethik, Linz, Austria. Translation from German: 2023 Welt-Spirale, Ethische Gesellschaft für Fortschritt und Weiterentwicklung, Linz Austria. weltspirale@aon.at, www.Welt-Spirale.com Electronic Edition. Gratuitously distribution of data carriers and printouts of this electronic edition are permitted.

Joy – Peace – Freedom

Serve peace and welfare of the world!

Overview of the „letters on living ethics, Introduction to Agni yoga“ from LEOBRAND:

Basic information ethics

1. The truth about yoga
2. Problems of spiritual renewal
3. The meaning of life
4. Karma and forming of fate
5. Might and meaning of thoughts
6. Self-help through proper thinking
7. Reincarnation – yes or no?
8. The meaning of suffering
9. Absolution or personal responsibility?
10. Dharma and life-task
- 11. Death and Rebirth**
12. Devotions and sacrifice
13. The relationship of the sexes
14. Marital problems
15. Living Ethics and education
16. Living Ethics and everyday life
17. Living Ethics and nutrition
18. Living Ethics and art

Spiritual training

19. Living Ethics – doctrine of life
20. Chakras or centers of higher consciousness
21. The spiritual meaning of the heart
22. The widening of consciousness
23. The subtle constitution of man
24. Monad or spiritual grain
25. The construction of the universe and Cosmoses
26. Subtle world
27. Fiery world
28. Brotherhood
29. The universal understanding of God
30. The Mother of the world
31. Occultism – yes or no?
32. Danger and meanders of occultism
33. Good and evil
34. The coming new world
35. Infinity
36. The path to become a master

The human being appears as a visible physical personality, but within him dwell mental and spiritual forces that direct, guide and lead him. They are centred in the so-called heart chakra and not in the brain. The psychic energies are summarised under the term "soul", while the higher spiritual energies are referred to as "I" or "ego". In the latter, experiences, abilities, wisdom and character traits are stored in its own consciousness - the causal body - which ensures the preservation of human individuality from life to life. The freedom of choice granted to the immortal human individual and the resulting cosmic responsibility force the evolving individual spirit to return to the material or gross world, where the causes were triggered and therefore the effects are also received.

„Welt-Spirale“
www.welt-spirale.com

Ethical society for progress and world renewal