



## Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

Literature, supporting the study (on Sunday, May 5, 2024)  
of the lecture of Herman C. Vermeulen (on Sunday, April 28, 2024)

Series: **COMPASSION – the Law of laws**  
Lecture: **Teachings on Avatāras**

### Helena P. Blavatsky on Avatāras

*H.P. Blavatsky, Collected Writings, Vol. 14, pp. 373-374*

Rebirths may be divided into three classes: the divine incarnations called **Avataras**; those of Adepts who give up Nirvâna for the sake of helping on humanity—the **Nirmânakâyas**; and the natural succession of rebirths for **all**—the common law. The Avatara is an appearance, one which may be termed a special illusion within the natural illusion that reigns on the planes under the sway of that power, Mâyâ; the Adept is reborn consciously, at his will and pleasure; the units of the common herd unconsciously follow the great law of dual evolution.

What is an Avatâra? for the term before being used ought to be well understood. It is a descent of the manifested Deity whether under the specific name of Siva, Vishnu, or Âdi-Buddha—into an illusive form of individuality, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but it is not so in sober fact. That illusive form having neither past nor future, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

\*\*\*

### Gottfried de Purucker on Avatāras

*Esoteric Teachings, Vol. 10 - The Hierarchy of Compassion, pp. 55-58*

#### The Doctrine of Avatāras, A Spiritual Event

THE doctrine of the Avatâra is a deeply mystical teaching indeed, and a very beautiful and suggestive one. It will lead you, perhaps more than any other teaching of ours, to realize that wonderful indeed and great are the mysteries still hid behind the veil of the outer seeming. An Avatâra is a spiritual transitory event. It comes like a blinding light from heaven into the world of

men, passes athwart the sky of human affairs, and vanishes. Pause in thought over this strange and wonderful fact.

The Avatāra is a composition, a magical fabrication, a putting together of spiritual, psychical, astral, and physical elements. Just like an ordinary man, it is composed of three bases: spirit, soul, body; but instead of being a man, a reincarnating ego with a long karmic past stretching back into the infinitudes of bygone duration, and with a long karmic future ahead of it, the Avatāra is a temporary union of these three elements, in order to produce a more or less permanent effect, spiritual and intellectual, on earth among men. It is a feat; it is a sublime feat of the highest White Magic deliberately done on the part of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, in order to introduce into our human atmosphere the direct influence and energy of a god. It is a spiritual splendor passing across the horizon of human history for spiritual work and then it is gone. An Avatāra is the very incarnation of Wisdom and Love, of Spiritual Grandeur, and of Divine Beauty.

The human being is a spirit-soul with a past, a present, and a future; while the Avatāra has a present but no past and no future because there is no reincarnating ego in the Avatāra belonging to the Avatāra in the sense that it belongs to an ordinary complete entitative human being. The intermediate nature of an Avatāra, or the psycho-spiritual apparatus, is loaned by a very highly evolved human being, actually by one of Buddha-type. Our own Lord Gautama the Buddha was the one who furnished his own psychological apparatus to the Avatāra Śankarāchārya in India, and also to Jesus whom you call the Christos. Neither of these two, neither Śankarāchārya nor Jesus, had any past karman, nor did they have any future karman in the ordinary human sense.

The Avatāra, as an Avatāra, is an illusion, a pure māyā, and obviously it is impossible for an illusion to re embody itself, to reincarnate: a wonderful paradox, a strange idea! But still something more strange when you realize that it is this māyā which does a wonderful work in the world. The Divinity is no māyā, the Buddhist element is no māyā, the body is no māyā, but it is the combining of these three into a temporary union which is the māyā.

The following words from H. P. B. describe generally, graphically, yet succinctly, the main characteristic of the nature and function of all avatāric beings, but especially and pointedly of the so called Upapādaka. The extract is taken from papers left by H. P. B., published after her death as "S. D. III." ['The Doctrine of Avatāras,' in *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. 14, pp. 373-4]

There is a great mystery in such incarnations and they are outside and beyond the cycle of general re-births. Rebirths may be divided into three classes: the divine incarnations called Avatāras; those of Adepts who give up Nirvāna for the sake of helping on humanity the *Nirmānakāyas*; and the natural succession of rebirths for all — the common law. The Avatāra is an appearance, one which may be termed a special illusion within the natural illusion that reigns on the planes under the sway of that power, *Māyā*; the Adept is re-born consciously, at his will and pleasure; the units of the common herd unconsciously follow the great law of dual evolution.

What is an Avatāra? for the term before being used ought to be well understood. It is a descent of the manifested Deity — whether under the specific name of Shiva, Vishnu, or Ādi-Buddha — into an illusive form of individuality, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but it is not so in sober fact. That illusive form having neither past nor future, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

A Buddha of Compassion can incarnate in a human body whenever he so wills and at any time. But they very rarely or perhaps never do that because Nature's spiritual mechanisms — and I use a familiar human word in order to be easily understood — are so delicately adjusted that the

Buddhas of Compassion come at certain cyclical times in racial history. Nevertheless their great influence is flowing out from them constantly, and permeates human hearts all the time, stimulates the human intellect among all men — at least whenever the divine visitor is welcomed.

\*\*\*