

## Chapter 2

# The Physical Bodies Of The Masters

## Their Appearance

There has been among theosophical students a great deal of vagueness and uncertainty about the Masters, so perhaps it may help us to realize how natural their lives are, and how there is an ordinary physical side to them, if I see a few words about the daily life and appearance of some of them. There is no one physical characteristic by which an adept can be infallibly distinguished from other men, but he always appears impressive, noble, dignified, Holy and serene, and anyone meeting him could hardly fail to recognize that he was in the presence of a remarkable man. He is the strong but silent man, speaking only when he has a definite object in view, to encourage, to help or to warn, yet he is wonderfully benevolent and full of a keen sense of humor—humor always of a kindly order, used never to wound, but always to light in the troubles of life. The Master Morya once said that is impossible to make progress on the occult path without a sense of humor, and certainly all the Adepts who might have seen have possessed that qualification.

Most of them are distinctly fine-looking men; their physical bodies are practically perfect, for they live in complete obedience to the loss of health, and above all the never worry about anything. All their Karma has long been exhausted, and thus the physical body is as perfect and expression of the of Augoeides or glorified body of the ego as the limitations of the physical plane will allow, so that not only is the present body of an adept usually splendidly handsome, but also any new body that he may take in a subsequent Incarnation is likely to be an almost exact reproduction of the old one, allowing for racial and family differences, because there's nothing to modify it. This freedom from Karma gives them, when for any reason they choose to take new bodies, entire liberty to select a birth in any country or race that may be convenient for the work that they have to do, and thus the nationality of the particular bodies which they happen to be wearing at any time is not of primary importance.

To know that a certain man is an adept it would be necessary to see his causal body, for in that his development which show by its greatly increased size, and by a special arrangement of its colors into concentric spheres, such as is indicated to some extent in the illustration of the causal body of an Arhat (see plate 26 in *Man, Visible and Invisible*).

## A Ravine In Tibet

There is a certain Valley, or rather a ravine, in Tibet, where three of these great ones, the Master Morya, the Master Kuthumi and the Master Djwal Khul are living at the present time.

The Master Djwal Khul, and of Madame Blavatsky's request, once made for her precipitated picture of the mouth of that ravine, and the illustration given here with is a reproduction of photograph of that. The original, which is precipitated on silk, is preserved in the shrine-room of the headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. On the left of the picture the Master Morya is seen on horseback near the door of his house. The dwelling of the Master Kuthumi does not appear in the picture, being higher up the valley, round the bend on the right. Madame Blavatsky begged the Master Djwal Khul to put himself into the picture; he of first refusal, but eventually added himself as a small figure standing in the water and grasping a pole, but with his back to the spectator! This Original is faintly tinted, the colors being blue, green and black. It bears the signature of the artist-the nickname Gai Ben-jamin, which she bore it is used in the early days of the Society, long before he reached Adeptsip. The scene is evidently taken early in the day, as the morning mists are still clinging to the hillsides.

The Masters Morya and Kuthumi occupy houses on opposite sides of this narrow ravine, the slopes of which are covered with pine trees. Paths run down the ravine past their houses, and meet at the bottom, where there is a little bridge. Close to the bridge a narrow door, which ABC in on the left at the bottom of the picture, leads to a system of vast subterranean halls containing an occult museum of which the Master Kuthumi is the guardian on behalf of the Great White Brotherhood.

The contents of this museum are of the most varied character. They appear to be intended as a kind of illustration of the whole process of evolution. For example, there are here the most life like images of every type of man which has existed on this planet from the commencement-from Gigantic loose-jointed Lemurians to Pygmy remains of even earlier and less human races. Models in *alto-relievo* show all the variations of the surface of the earth-the conditions before and after the great cataclysms which it changed it so much. Huge diagrams illustrate the migrations of the different races of the world, and sure exactly how far they spread from their respective sources. Other similar diagrams are devoted to the influence of the various religions of the world, showing where each was practiced in its original purity, and where it became mingled with and distorted by the remains of other religions.

Amazingly life-like statures perpetuate the physical appearance of certain of the great leaders and teachers of long-forgotten races; and various objects of interest connected with important and even on notice advancements in civilization are preserved for the examination of posterity. Origin no manuscripts of incredible Antiquity at a priceless value are here to be seen-a manuscript, for example, written by the hand of the Lord Buddha himself in his final life as Prince Siddharta, and another written by the Lord Christ during his birth in Palestine. Here is kept that marvelous original of the *Book of Dzryan*, which Madame Blavatsky describes in the opening of *the Secret Doctrine*. Animal and vegetable forms are also depicted, some few of which are known to us as fossils, the most of them are and imagined by our modern science. Actual models of some of the great cities of remote and forgotten antiquity are here for the study of the pupils.

All statues and models of vividly colored exactly as were the originals; and we may note that the collection here was intentionally put together at the time, in order to represent to posterity the exact stages through which the evolution or civilization of the time was passing, so that instead of mere incomplete fragments, such as our museums so often present to us, we haven't all cases and intentionally educative series of presentations. There we find the models of all the kinds of machinery which the different civilizations have evolved, and also there are elaborate and abundant illustrations of the types of magic in use at the various periods of history.

In the vestibule leading to these vast halls are kept the living images of those peoples of the Masters Morya and Kuthumi who happened at the time to be on probation, which I will describe later. These images are ranged round the walls like statues, and are perfect representations of the pupils concerned. It is not probable, however, that they are visible to physical eyes, for the lowest matter entering into their composition is the etheric.

Near the bridge there is also small temple with turrets of somewhat Burmese form, to which a few villagers go to make offerings of food and flowers, and to burn camper and recite the Pancha Sila. A rough and uneven track leads down the valley by the side of the stream. From either of the two houses of the Masters the other house can be seen; they are both above the bridge, but both cannot be seen from it, since the ravine bends round. If we follow the path up the valley pass the house of the Master Kuthumi it will lead us to a large pillar of rock, beyond which, the ravine bending round again, it passes out of sight. Some distance further on the ravine opens out into a plateau on which there is a lake, in which, tradition tells us, Madame Blavatsky used to bathe; and it is said in that she found it very cold. The valley is sheltered and faces south, and though the surrounding country is under snow during the winter, I do not remember having seen any near the Masters' houses. These houses are of stone, very heavily and strongly built.

The house of the Master Kuthumi is divided into two parts by a passageway running straight through it. As seen from our diagram, which shows the ground plan of the southern half of the house, on entering the passage, the first door on the right leads into the principal room of the house, in which the Master usually sits. It is large and lofty (about 50 ft. by 30 ft.), in many ways more like a hall than a room, and it occupies the whole of the front of the House on that side of the passage. Behind that large room are two other nearly square rooms, one of which he uses as a library, and the other as a bedroom. That completes that side or division of the House, which is apparently reserved for the Master's personal use, and is surrounded by a broad veranda. The other side of the House, on the left of the passage as one enters, seems to be divided into small rooms and offices of various kinds; we have had no opportunity of closely examining them, but we have noted that just across the passage from the bedroom is a well-appointed bathroom.

The large room is well supplied with windows, both along the front and the end—so well that on entering one gets the impression of an almost continuous outlook, and under the windows runs along seat. There is also a somewhat unusual feature for that country, a large open fireplace in

the middle of the wall opposite the front windows. This is so arranged as to heat all three rooms, and it has a curious hammered iron cover, which I'm told is unique in Tibet. Over the opening of that fireplace is a mantelpiece, and nearby stands the Master's armchair of very old card wood, hollowed to fit the sitter, so that for it no cushions are required. Daunted about the room are tables and settees or sofas, mostly without backs, and in one corner is the keyboard of the Master's organ. The ceiling is perhaps 20 ft. high, and is very handsome, with its fine carved beams, which descended into ornamental points with the meet one another and divide the ceiling into oblong sections. An arched opening with a pillar in the center, somewhat in the Gothic style, but without glass, opens in to the study, and a similar window opens into the bedroom. This latter room is very simply furnished. There is an ordinary bed, swung hammock-like between 2 carved wooden supports fixed in the wall (one of these carved to imitate a lion's head, and the other an elephant's) and the bed when not in use folds up against the wall.

The library is a fine room, containing thousands of volumes. Running out full there are tall bookshelves, filled with books in many languages, a number of them being modern European works and at the top there are open shelves for manuscripts. The master is a great linguist, and besides being a fine English scholar has a thorough knowledge of French and German. The library also contains a typewriter, which was presented to the Master by one of his pupils.

Of the Master's family I know but little. There is a lady, evidently a pupil, whom he calls 'sister'. Whether she is actually his sister or not I do not know; she might possibly be a cousin or niece. She looks much older than he, but that would not make the relationship improbable, as he has appeared out of about the same age for a long time. She resembles him to a certain extent, and once or twice when there have been gatherings she has come and join the party, though her principal work seems to be to look after the housekeeping and manage the servants. Among the latter are an old man and his wife, who have been for a long time in the Master's service. They do not know anything of the real dignity of their employer, but regard him as a very indulgent and gracious patron, and naturally they benefit greatly by being in his service

#### The Master's Activities

The Master has a large garden of his own. He possesses too, a quantity of land, and employs labors to cultivated. Near the house there flowering shrubs growing freely, with ferns among them. Through the garden there flows a streamlet, which forms a little waterfall, and over it a tiny bridge is built. Here he often sets when he is sending out streams of thought and benediction upon his people; it would no doubt appear to the casual observer as though he were sitting idly watching nature, and listening heedlessly to the song of the birds, and to the splash and tumble of the water. Sometimes, too, he rests in his great armchair, and when people see him thus, they know that he must not be disturbed; they do not know exactly what he is doing, but suppose him to be in samadhi. The fact that people in the East understand this kind of meditation and respect it may be one of the reasons why the Adepts prefer to live there rather than in the West.

In this way, we get the effect of the Master sitting quietly for a considerable part of the day and as we should say, meditating; but when he is apparently resting so calmly, he is in reality engaged all the time in most strenuous labor on higher planes, manipulating various natural forces and pouring forth influences of the most diverse nature character on thousands of souls simultaneously; for the Adepts are the busiest people in the world. The Master, however, does much physical-plane work as well; he has composed some music, and has written notes and papers for various purposes. He is also much interested in the growth of physical science, although this is especially the province of one of Great Masters of the Wisdom.

From time to time the Master Kuthumi rides on a big bay horse, and occasionally, when their work lies together, he's accompanied by the Master Morya, who always rides a magnificent white horse. Our Master regularly visits some of the monasteries, and sometimes goes up a great pass to a lonely monastery in the hills. Riding in the course of his duties seems to be his principal exercise, but he sometimes walks with the Master Djwal Khul, who lives in a little cabin which he built with his own hands, quite near the great crag on the way up to the plateau.

Sometimes our master plays on the organ which is in the large room in his house. He had it made in Tibet under his direction, and it is in fact a combined piano and organ, with a keyboard like those which we have in the West, on which he can play all our western music. It is unlike any other instrument with which I am acquainted, for it is in a sense a double-fronted, as it can be played either from the sitting room or the library. The principal keyboard (or rather the three keyboards, great organ, swell and choir) is in the sitting room, whereas the piano keyboard is in the library; and these keyboards can be used either together or separately. The full organ with its pedals can be played in this ordinary way from the sitting room; but by turning a handle somewhat equivalent to a stop, the piano mechanism can be linked with the organ, so that it all plays simultaneously. From that point of view, in fact, the piano is treated as an additional stop on the organ.

From the keyboard and a library, however, the piano can be played alone as a separate instrument, quite dissociated from the organ; but by some complicated mechanism the choir-organ, is also linked to that keyboard, so that by it one can play the piano alone precisely as though it were an ordinary piano, all one can play the piano accompanied by the choir-organ, or any rate by certain stops of that organ. It is also possible, as I said in, to separate the two completely, and so, with a performer and each keyboard, to play a piano-organ duet. The mechanism and the pipes of this strange instrument occupy almost the whole of what might be called the upper story of this part of the Master's house. By magnetization he has placed it in communication with the Gandharvas, or Devas of music, so that whenever it is played they cooperate, and thus he obtains combinations of sound never to be heard in the physical plane; and there is, too, an effect produced by the organ itself as of an accompaniment of string and wind instruments.

The song of the Davis is ever being sung in the world; it is ever sounding in men's ears, but they will not listen to its beauty. There is the deep bourdon **of the sea, the sighing of the wind in the trees**, the roar of the mountain torrent, the music of stream, river and waterfall, which together with many others formed the mighty song of nature as she lives. This is but the echo in the physical world of a far grander sound, that of the being of the Devas. As said in *Light on the Path*:

Only fragments of the great song come to your ears while yet you are but man. But, if you listen to it, remember it faithfully, so that none, which has reached you, is lost, and endeavor to learn from it the meaning of the mystery which surrounds you. In time you will need no teacher. For as the individual has voice, so has that in which the individual exists. Life itself has speech, and is never silent. And its utterance is not, as you that are deaf may suppose, a cry; it is a song. Learn from it that you are part of the harmony; learn from it to obey the laws of harmony.

Every morning a number of people-not exactly pupils, but followers-come to the Master's house, and sit on the veranda and outside it. Sometimes he gives them a little talk-a sort of a lecturette; but more often he goes on with his work and takes no notice of them beyond a friendly smile, with which they seem equally contented. They evidently come to sit in his aura and venerate him. Sometimes he takes his food in their presence, sitting on the veranda with this crowd of Tibetans and others on the ground around him; but generally eats by himself at a table in his room. It is possible that he keeps the rule of the Buddhist monks, and takes no food after noon; for I do not remember ever to have seen him eat in the evening; it is even possible that he does not need food every day. Most probably when he feels inclined he orders the food that he would like, and does not take his meals at stated times. I have seen him eating little round cakes, brown and sweet; they are made of wheat and sugar and butter, and are of the ordinary kind used in the household, cooked by his sister. He also eats curry and rice, the curry being somewhat in the form of soup, like dahl. He uses a curious and beautiful golden spoon, with an exquisite image of an elephant at the end of the handle, the bowl of which is set at an unusual angle to the stem. It is a family heirloom, very old and probably of great value. He generally wears white clothes, but I do not remember ever having seen him wearing a headdress of any kind, except on the rare occasions when he assumes the yellow robe of the Gelupa sect or clan, which includes a hood somewhat of the shape of the Roman helmet. The Master Morya, however, generally wears a turban.

## Other Houses

The house of the Master Morya is on the opposite side of the valley, but much lower down- quite close, in fact, to the little temple and the entrance to the caves. It is of an entirely different style of architecture, having at least two stories, and the front facing the road has two verandas and each level which are almost entirely the glassed in. The general method and arrangement of his life is much the same as that already described in the case of the Master Kuthumi.

If we walk up the road the left bank of the stream, rising gradually along the side of the valley, we pass on the right the house and grounds of the Master Kuthumi, and further up the hill we find on the same side of the road a small hut or cabin which he who is now the Master Djwal Khul constructed for himself with his own hands in the days of his pupilage, in order that he might have an abiding place quite near to his master. In that cabin hangs a sort of plaque upon which at his request one of the English Pupils of the Master Kuthumi precipitated many years ago an interior view of the larger room in the house of the Master Kuthumi, showing the figures of various Masters and pupils. This was done in commemoration of what certain especially happy and fruitful evening at the Master's house.

### The First Ray Adepts

Turning now to consideration of the personal appearance of these great ones: that is modified to some extent by the Ray or type to which each of them belongs. The first ray has power for its most prominent characteristic, and those who are borne upon it are the kings, the rulers, the governors of the world-of the inner and spiritual world in the first place, but also of the physical plane. Any man who possesses in a very unusual degree the qualities which enable him to dominate men and to guide them smoothly along the course which he desires is likely to be either a first ray man or one who is tending toward the first ray.

Such a kingly figure is the Lord Vaivasvata Manu, the ruler of the fifth root race, who is the tallest of all the Adepts, being 6 ft. 8 in. in height, and perfectly proportioned. He is the representative man of our race, its prototype, and every member of that race is direct descended from him, Manu has a very striking face of great power, with an aquiline nose, a full and flowing brown beard, brown eyes, and a magnificent head of leonine poise. " Tall is he, " says Dr. Besant, " and of king-like majesty, with eyes piercing as an eagle's, tawny and brilliant with golden lights. " He is living at present in the Himalayan Mountains, not far from the House of his great brother, the Lord Maitreya.

Such a figure also is the Master Morya, the lieutenant and successor of the Lord Vaivasvata Manu, and the future Manu of the sixth Root-Race. He is a Rajput King by birth, and as a dark beard divided into two parts, dark, almost black, hair falling to his shoulders, and dark and piercing eyes, full of power. He is 6 ft. 6 in. in height, and bears himself like a soldier, speaking in short terse sentences as if he were accustomed to being instantly obeyed. In his presence there is a sense of overwhelming power and strength, and he has an imperial dignity that compels the deepest reverence.

Madame Blavatsky has told us how she met the Master Morya in Hyde Park, London, in the year 1851, when he came over with a number of other Indian princes to attend the first Great International Exhibition. Strangely enough, I myself, then a little child of four, saw him also, all unknowing. I can remember being taken to see a gorgeous procession, at which among many of the wonders came a party of richly dressed Indian horsemen. Magnificent horsemen they were, riding steeds as fine, I suppose, as any in the world, and it was only natural that my

childish eyes were fixed upon them in great delight, and that they were perhaps to me the finest exhibit of that marvelous and fairy-like show. And even as I watched them pass, as I stood holding my father's hand, one of the tallest of those heroes fixed me with gleaming black eyes, which half-frightened me, and yet at the same time filled me somehow with indescribable happiness and exaltation. He passed with the others and I saw him no more, yet often the vision of that flashing eye returned to my childish memory

Of course I knew nothing then of who he was, and I should never have identified him had not been for a gracious remark which he made to me many years afterwards. Speaking one day in his presence of the earlier days of the Society I happened to say that the first time I had had the privilege of seeing him in materialized form was on a certain occasion when he came into Madame Blavatsky's room in Adyar, for the purpose of giving her strength and issuing certain directions. He himself, who was engaged in conversation with some other Adepts turn sharply upon me and said: " No, that was not the first time. You had seen me before then in my physical body. Do you not remember, as a tiny child, watching the Indian and horsemen ride past in Hyde Park, and did you not see how even then I single you out? " I remembered instantly, of course, and said: "Oh, Master, was that you? But I ought to have known it. " I do not mentioned this incident among the occasions when I have met and spoken with a Master, both parties to the interview being in the physical body, because I did not at the time know that great of horsemen to be the Master, and because the evidence of so small child might well be doubted or discounted

Mr. S Ramaswami, in his account of the experience mentioned in Chapter 1, writes:

I was following the road to the town whence, I was assured by people I met on the road, I could cross over to Tibet easily in my pilgrim's garb, when I suddenly saw a solitary horsemen galloping toward me from the opposite direction. From his tall stature and skill in horsemanship, I thought he was some military officer of the Sikkim Rajah . . . . As he approached me, he reined up. I looked at him and recognized him instantly. . . . I was in the awful presence of him, of the same Mahatma, my own revered Guru, whom I had seen before in his astral body on the balcony of the Theosophical headquarters. It was he, the Himalayan brother of the ever-memorable night of December last, who had so kindly dropped a letter in answer to one I had given but an hour or so before in a sealed envelope to Madame Blavatsky, whom I had never lost sight of for one moment during the interval. The very same instant saw me prostrated on the ground at his feet. I rose at his command, and, leisurely looking into his face, forgot myself entirely in the contemplation of the image I knew so well, having seen his portrait (that in Colonel Olcott's possession) times out of number. I knew not what to say; joy and reverence tied my tongue. The majesty of his countenance, which seem to me to be the impersonation of power and thought, rapt in awe. I was at last face-to-face with the Mahatma of the Himavat, and he was no myth, no creation of the imagination of a medium, as some skeptics had suggested. It was no dream of the night; it was between nine and ten o'clock of the forenoon. There was the sun shining and silently witnessing the scene from above. I see him before me in flesh and blood, and he speaks to me in accents of kindness and gentleness. What more could I

want? My excess of happiness made me dumb. Nor was it until some time had elapsed that I was able to utter a few words, encouraged by his gentle tone and speech. His complexion is not as fair as that of Mahatma Kuthumi; but never have I seen a countenance so handsome, a stature so tall and so majestic. As in his portrait, he wears a short black beard, and long black hair hanging down to his breast; only his dress was different. Instead of all white, loose robe he wore a yellow mantle lined with fur, and on his head, instead of the turban, a yellow Tibetan felt cap, such as I have seen some Bhutanese wear in this country. When the first moments of rapture and surprise were over, and I, calmly comprehended the situation, I had a long talk with him.

And as such reconfigure is the Lord Chakshusha, the Manu of the Fourth Root-Race, who is Chinese by birth, and of very high caste. He has the high Mongolian cheekbones, and his face looks as though it were delicately carved from old ivory. He generally wears magnificent robes of flowing cloth-of-gold. As of rule we do not come into contact with him in our regular work, except when it happens that we have to deal with a pupil belonging to his Root-Race.

## The Second Ray Adepts

In the persons of the Lord Bodhisattva, the World Teacher, and of the Master Kuthumi, his principal lieutenant, the influence that is especially noticeable is the radiance of their all-embracing Love. The Lord Maitreya is wearing a body of the Keltic race at the present time. His is a face of wondrous beauty, strong and yet most tender, with rich hair flowing like red gold above his shoulders. His beard is pointed, as in some of the old pictures, and his eyes, of a wonderful violet, I like twinflowers, like stars, like deep and holy pools filled with the waters of everlasting peace. His smile is dazzling beyond words, and a blinding glory of light surrounds him, intermingled with that marvelous rose-colored glow which never shines from the Lord of Love.

We think of him as seated in the great front room of his house in the Himalayas, the room with many windows, that overlooks the gardens and the terraces and, far below, the rolling Indian plains; or it in flowing robes of white, its with a deep border of gold, as walking in his garden in the cool the evening, among the glorious flowers, whose Perfume fills the surrounding air with their rich, sweet fragrance. Wondrous beyond measure is our Holy Lord the Christ, wondrous beyond any power of description, for through him flows the Love which comforts millions, and his is the voice that speaks, as never man spake, the words of teaching that bring peace to Angels and to men.

The Master Serapis is tall, and fair in complexion. He is a Greek by birth, though all his work has been done in Egypt and in connection with the Egyptian Lodge. He is very distinguished and ascetic in face, somewhat resembling the late Cardinal Newman.

Perhaps the Venetian Chohan is the handsomest all the members of the brotherhood. He's very tall-about 6 ft. 5 in., and has a flowing beard and golden hair somewhat like those of the Manu;

and his eyes are blue. Although he was born in Venice, his family undoubtedly has Gothic blood in its veins, for he is a man distinctly of that type.

The Master Hilarion is a Greek and, except that he has a slightly aquiline nose, is of the ancient Greek type. His forehead is low and broad, and resembles that of Hermes of Praxiteles. He too is wonderfully handsome, and looks rather younger than most of the Adepts.

He who was once the disciple of Jesus is now wearing a Syrian body. He has the dark skin, dark eyes and black beard of the Arab, and generally wears white robes and a turban. He is the Master of devotees, and the keynote of his presence is an intense purity, and a fiery type of devotion that brooks no obstacles. He lives amongst the Druses of Mt. Lebanon.

Two of the great ones with whom we have come into contact divert slightly from what perhaps we may call, with all reverence, the usual type of the physical body of the Adept. One of these is the Spiritual Regent of India, he whom Colonel Olcott several times writes, to whom the name Jupiter was assigned in the book *Man: Whence, How and Whither*. He is shorter than most members of the Brotherhood, and is the only one of them, so far as I am aware, whose hair shows streaks of gray. He holds himself upright and moves with alertness and military precision. He is a landed proprietor, and during a visit which I paid him with Swami T Subba Row, I saw him several times transacting business with men who appeared to be foremen, bringing reports to him and receiving instructions. The other is the Master Djwal Khul, who is still wearing the same body in which he attained Adeptship only a few years ago. Perhaps for that reason it has not been possible to make that body of Perfect reproduction of the Augoeides. His face is distinctly Tibetan in character with high cheekbones, and is somewhat rugged in appearance showing signs of age.

## **Perfect Physical Vehicles**

Those who, attaining to the level of Adeptship, choose as their future career to remain upon this world and help directly in the evolution of their own humanity, find it convenient for their work to retain their physical bodies. In order to be suitable for their purposes, these bodies must be of no ordinary kind. Not only must they be absolutely sound in health, but they must also be perfect expressions of as much of the ego as can be manifested on the physical plane.

The building up of such a body as this is no light task. When the ego of an ordinary man comes down to his new baby body, he finds it in charge of an artificial elemental, which has been created according to his Karma, as I have described in *The Inner Life*. This elemental is industriously occupied in modeling the form which is soon to be born in the outer world, and remains after birth and continues that molding process usually until the body is six or seven years old. During this period the ego is gradually acquiring closer contact with his new vehicles, emotional and mental as well as physical, and is becoming accustomed to them; but the actual work done by himself upon these new vehicles up to the point at which the elemental withdraws is, in most cases, inconsiderable. He is certainly in connection with the body, but generally pays

but little attention to it, preferring to wait until it is reached the stage where it is more responsive to his efforts.

The case of an adept is very different from this. As there is no Karmic to be worked out, no artificial elemental is at work, and the ego himself is in sole charge of the development of the body from the beginning, finding himself limited only by its heredity. This enables us far more refined and delicate instrument to be produced, but it also involves more trouble for the ego, engages for some years a considerable amount of his time and energy. In consequence of this, and no doubt for other reasons as well, and Adept does not wish to repeat the process more often than is strictly necessary, and he therefore makes his physical body last as long as possible. Our bodies grow old and die for various reasons, from inherited weakness, disease, accidents and self indulgence, worry and overwork. But in the case of an adept none of these causes is present, though we must of course remember that his body is fit for work and capable of endurance immeasurably beyond those of ordinary men.

The bodies of the Adepts being such as we have described, they are usually able to hold possession of them much longer than an ordinary man can, and the consequence is that we find on inquiry that the age of such Body is usually much greater than from appearances we had suppose it to be. The Master Morya, for example, appears to be a man absolutely in the prime of life--possibly thirty-five or forty years of age; yet many of the stories which his pupils tell of him assign to him an age four or five times greater than that, and Madame Blavatsky herself told us that when she first saw him in her childhood he appeared to her exactly the same as at the present time. Again, the Master Kuthumi has the appearance of being about the same age as his constant friend and companion, the Master Morya; yet it has been said that he took a university degree in Europe just before the middle of the last century, which would certainly make him something very like a centenarian. We have at present no means of knowing what is the limit of prolongation, though there is evidence to show that it may easily extend to more than double the threescore years and ten of the Psalmist.

A body thus made suitable for higher work is inevitably a sensitive one, and for that very reason it requires careful treatment if it is to be always at its best. It would wear out as ours do if it were subjected to the innumerable petty frictions of the outer world, and its constant torrent of unsympathetic vibrations. Therefore, the great ones usually lived in comparative seclusion, and appear but rarely into cyclonic chaos, which we call daily life. If they were to bring bodies into the whirl of curiosity and vehement Emotion, there can be no doubt that the life of these bodies would be greatly shortened, and also, because of their extreme sensitiveness, there would be much unnecessary suffering.

## **Borrowed Vehicles**

By temporarily occupying the body of a pupil, the Adept avoids these inconveniences, and at the same time gives and incalculable impetus to the pupil's evolution. He inhabits the vehicle only when he needs it--to deliver a lecture, perhaps, or to pour out a special flood of blessing;

and as soon as he has done what he wishes, he steps out of the body, and the pupil, who has all the while been in attendance, resumes it, as the Adept goes back to his own proper vehicle to continue his usual work for the helping of the world. In this way a regular business is but little affected, yet he has always at his disposal a body through which he can work, when required, on the physical plane.

We can readily imagine in what way this will affect the pupil who is so favored as to have the opportunity of thus lending his body to the great one, though the extent of its action may well be beyond our calculation. A vehicle so tuned by such an influence will be to him verily and assistance, not a limitation; and while his body is in use he will always have the privilege of bathing in the Adept's marvelous magnetism, for he must be at hand to resume charge as soon as the Master has finished with it.

This plan of borrowing a suitable body is always adopted by the great ones when they think it will to descend among men, under conditions such as those which now obtain in the world. The Lord Gautama employed it when he came to attain the Buddha hood, and the Lord Maitreya took the same course when he visited Palestine two thousand years ago. The only exception known to me is that when a new Bodhisattva assumes the office of the world-teacher after his predecessor has become the Buddha, on his first appearance in the world in that captivity he takes birth as a little child in the ordinary way. Thus did our Lord, the present Bodhisattva, when he took birth as Shri Krishna on the glowing plains of India, to be revered and loved with a passionate devotion that has scarcely ever been equaled.

This temporary occupation of a pupil's body should not be confused with the permanent use of an advanced person of a vehicle prepared for him by someone else. Our Founder, Madame Blavatsky, when she left the body in which we knew her, entered another which had just been abandoned by its original tenant. As to whether that body had been specially prepared for her use, I have no information; but other instances are known in which that was done. There's always in such cases a certain difficulty in adapting the vehicle to the needs and idiosyncrasies of the new occupant; and it is probable that it never becomes of perfectly fitting garment. There is for the incoming ego a choice between devoting a considerable amount of time and trouble to superintending the growth of a new vehicle, which would be a perfect expression of him, as far as that is possible on the physical plane; or avoiding all that difficulty by entering the body of another--a process which will provide a reasonably good instrument for all ordinary purposes; but it will never fulfill in every respect all that its owner desires. In all cases, a pupil is naturally eager to have the honor of giving up his body to his Master; but few indeed are the vehicles pure enough to be so used.

The question is often raised as to why and the debt, whose work seems to lie almost entirely on higher planes, needs a physical body at all. It is really no concern of ours, but if speculation on such a matter be not irreverent, various reasons suggest themselves. The Adept spends much of his time in projecting streams of influence, and while, so as far as has been observed, there are most often on the higher mental level, or on the plane above that, it is probable that they may

sometimes at least be etheric currents, and for the manipulation of these the possession of a physical body is undoubtedly an advantage. Again, most of the Masters whom I have seen have a few pupils or assistants who live with or near them on the physical plane, and a physical body may be necessary for their sake. Of this we may be certain, that if an Adept chooses to take the trouble to maintain such a body, he has a good reason for it; for we know enough of their methods of working to be fully aware that they always do everything in the best way, and by the means which involve the least expenditure of energy.