

be discarded. Science, for example, is more progressive than religion for the very reason that it periodically relinquishes its outdated and inaccurate beliefs. As Jesus said, "Old things are passing away; behold, all things are becoming new."

Ages have been required for cultures to acquire all the evolutionarily-derived religious and moral codes we enjoy today. Too profound a revelation would rob humanity of these gradual evolutionary acquisitions. Light is good—but too much light is blinding. Confusion and dismay would result if superior concepts attempted to over-teach and over-enlighten. Our heavenly parent does not inject his hand into the stream of human affairs in an overbearing manner.

THE MAGNITUDE OF REVELATION

Religion progresses through evolutionary growth and by incremental revelation. The development of human religious capacity largely determines the extent of revelation.

There is no time limit as to when revelation can be applied to the human reception of divine truth. Profound revelations affecting more than one individual occur even now as they have in the past.

Epochal revelations, occurring ages apart, provide an enlarged presentation of spiritual truth and religious ethics to all humanity. An epochal revelation is presented by celestial agents or personalities (not by the supposed "spirits of the dead") for the benefit of all the world. Before our current age, the previous epochal revelation was the life and teaching of Jesus.

Should we expect other epochal revelations? If so will they come in the form of another transcendent man or woman? Is that necessary?

EPOCHAL REVELATION COMPELS PERSONAL DECISION

In Jesus' time news dispersed through personal contact, by word of mouth. Today, news is spread in a wide variety of ways.

While not technically considered a revelation because of its human origin, the Bible is an example of the impact one book can wield. Today a document of celestial origin would potentially reach more people on a personal level than one divine teacher could. An authentic revelation, translated into the major languages of the world, could provide individual and personal ministry to each searching human being anywhere.

If instead of the 20th century, you were alive in Palestine 2,000 years ago, would you have recognized Jesus' words of truth? Would you have broken with your tradition? Would you have forsaken the old for the new and believed that the humble carpenter's son from Nazareth was really the Son of God? And today, would you be willing or capable of taking that step in faith if, through your own recognition of truth, having tested its validity, you were convinced of its authenticity? If there were such an authentic, epochal revelation of religious, philosophical, and scientific significance, little known — perhaps right now the world's best kept secret — would you be able to recognize it for what it is? If an angel of the Lord appeared saying, "I'm willing to answer all of your deepest philosophical questions" would you hesitatingly say, "Maybe later."?

We may at this very moment be quivering on the brink of a new spirituality. To those who study it, *The Urantia Book* unquestionably strikes the mark as a divine revelation of world-wide epochal significance, just as it proclaims itself to be. Are you aware of it? Have you heard of it before this?

Allow your Father in heaven to take your hand and lead you on a journey of personal religious discovery, to diverge from the well-worn path of tradition. Trust yourself to be able to discern the spiritual ring of truth. Take a personal step in faith. You know most of the story already; could it now be time to learn more?

The Urantia Book; you have to read it to believe it!

REVELATION

AND

THE URANTIA BOOK

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REVELATION

Years go by, life continues—much as it has in the past. Society, today's culture of the 1990's, has been changed bit by bit in each preceding decade, yet day-to-day life is not significantly different from previous decades. Books written not too long ago (like *1984*, and other futuristic sociological portrayals of today's world) have missed their prophetic marks. We are still human. Machines, totalitarian governments, and anarchy have not completely disrupted our personal relationships and lives in the ways projected by seers of just a few years ago.

Surely, major cultural changes have occurred, some better, many not so. If left totally to our own devices, we could undoubtedly render our "home in space" humanly uninhabitable through environmental, cultural, or moral destruction. It is still possible over time for contemporary culture to decay and for dire visions from the past to manifest, but there is better reason to believe this will not occur.

Pessimistic views of our future often overlook unaccounted-for saving alterations to cultural decline. These are the traditions of religion and the infusion of wholly new spiritual energy through the agencies of revelation—alterations not usually figuring into the prognosticator's visions. Religious revelation has truly been and still truly is an active influence in our world. Revelation—God reaching down to humanity—is a divine technique in which ages upon ages are saved through sorting and sifting error from truth. Revelation occurs today as a continuous personal human experience, as it has throughout history.

Each of us is capable of receiving personal revelation. And because God indwells each of us, personal revelation is a daily occurrence on our world. God is there when we look within. When we listen, our lives can change. God most often speaks to us in terms of truth, beauty, and goodness.

HOW REVELATION IS DISCERNED

A divine spirit indwells us. Because of this, spiritual values and boundless insight are derived from the experiences of our personal lives.

Our Father in heaven does not limit the revelation of truth to any one people, to any one generation, or to any

one person. Truth must not be discounted because of its origin. We have the capacity to discern the ring of truth, whatever its source, for each of us has personal access to the Spirit of Truth—the gift bestowed upon all humanity nearly 2,000 years ago. It is not necessary to continue to seek our heavenly parent only through the pages of ancient records or through religions of authority.

Many Christians believe that the Bible is the infallible and final word of God—that there is no justifiable assumption for significant new revelation being added to humanity's religious wealth. The sacred texts of other religions are similarly revered by their believers. Many people find comfort in the rigid boundaries of belief and in religious traditions spanning uncounted generations and thousands of years. Authority from a hierarchy of religious leaders provides additional weight to the semblance of truth in aged doctrines. With millions of adherents to any one doctrine why would anyone want to risk the perceived consequences of being off the spiritual mark? Many believe it is better to follow the trail where it is most worn and heavily trodden, and yet Jesus advises us to seek, ask, and knock, implying that it is acceptable to explore new pathways personally.

The truth is: belief fixates, faith liberates. To acknowledge new, untested truth requires a step of faith away from old paths onto unexplored landscapes. The step of faith is larger than many are willing to take—the same today as it was when Jesus revealed new and untested truth 2,000 years ago.

REVELATION IS NOT WISHPFUL THINKING

Spirit-led individuals, not shielded by the dogma of scriptural infallibility, are constantly flooded with supposed "new information" posing as revelation. But is it? Simply because a thought, message, or book is labeled *revelation*, does not make it so. Often materials derived through spiritualism, mediumship, channeling, and other unusual phenomenon are presented as new and true revelations. Through the mind, divine truth may indeed shine forth, but always relative in its purity and partial in its divinity. Nothing which imperfect human nature has touched can be regarded as infallible. Proof of authenticity for revelation is found only within individual personal experience. Reason is the proof of science, logic is the proof of philosophy, faith is the proof of religion, but

revelation is validated through personal experience. Science yields knowledge, philosophy yields unity, religion yields happiness. Revelation will confirm factual harmony of science, philosophy, and religion. Any true or real revelation will synthesize the natural sciences and religious theology into a consistent, logical philosophy with a coordinated explanation of life, science and religion.

Truth may be but relatively inspired; revelation invariably a personal spiritual phenomenon. A true revelation will create a harmony of mind and a satisfactory spirit. It will answer personal questions as to how God will and plans work out in matter, mind, and spirit here on earth.

Revelation is evolutionarily progressive. The revelation of one age must be augmented in successive ages. This means that, down through the ages, the revelation of religion have been ever-expanding and successively more enlightening. Revelation sorts, censors, and amplifies evolving religion. But for revelation to exalt and prove religion, such divine presentations of truth must portray teachings not too far removed from the thoughts and reactions of the age in which they occur. Revelation must keep in touch with human evolution.

WHAT A REVELATION WOULD SAY

Revelation must be new and unique but it must also be limited to our capacity for truth receptivity. Absolute truth remains unchanging. Human perceptions of truth change from generation to generation; human knowledge varies from year to year and from day to day. Revelation infuses new truths by deity into what is already known, as a divine modification of imperfect human understanding. A modern-religious revelation would substantiate, to some degree, doctrine held in the past; otherwise, it would not be grounded in the truth of religious heritage. At the same time, a modern-day revelation would diverge from the past; it would not conform to all the age-old beliefs or values held to be sacred merely because they are old. Otherwise, such revelation would be of little new significant value. Totally new ideas would provide bridges between the old and new. Revelation mandates that erroneous concepts, even if held sacred