



THE URANTIAN®

Journal of URANTIA® Brotherhood

While it is not the practice of The JOURNAL to print letters, the article which follows is written in that form to convey its meaning in a personally powerful way. Thanks from all of us for a very important reminder. The Editors.

Dear Brother:

It's always good to hear from you. I like to know what's going on at home and at the office.

But is life not more than comings and goings and resolutions and documents? Tell me, how is your sister in California? Is she being healed from her distress?

You know I'm always interested in your theological studies—it is an interest which you and I share. But you did not tell me how reading that last book affected you for good, or to what application it might be useful. Please understand me, brother, I don't think that I'm stupid. It's just that I don't always have time to dig through a monumentl treatise before I know what it's FOR.

The family in this area is struggling as usual—each one individually to get by. In fact, cousin Harvey is still not speaking to Cousin Irving. Tell me, brother, in your communications with our other cousins and brothers, have any shared with you a similar problem—lack of leadership or even lack of relationship—that you might be able to apply to our situation here? Our Creator Son patiently supported all kinds of persons through many kinds of troubles. If there were just some way we could do that for each other more, in spite of our differing locations, we could truly lighten each other's loads.

Remember how Uncle Clyde said:

Why have I not seen more clearly that as You have translated the symphonies of Paradise itself for us in our Great Book—we cannot hold them to echo forever in our memories unless we orchestrate them in our personal way into brotherly daily touching of others' lives with words and love and action!

Please let our letters and publications to one another be expressions of love and caring, regardless of our functions, positions, locations or opinions, not merely

collections of facts and references. And let's laugh together, at ourselves and our foibles.

I truly would like to feel free to tease you. You take your responsibilities with such dead-pan seriousness. It's just irresistible, particularly when your letters come across like a dandy stuffed shirt, as they sometimes do. (Well of course, EVERYBODY can't be so important: . . .)

Remember, before we became readers of *The Urantia Book*, how we quibbled about doctrines and ethics? That really was an unproductive exercise; and I'm so glad we don't have to do that anymore.

Well, I do have to get on to some other tasks. Please write again soon, and I promise I'll try to return some encouraging thoughts.

—Maureen Cragg
Arlington, Virginia

FROM THE EDITORS

We gratefully acknowledge the thoughtful responses to the questions we posed in previous issues of The JOURNAL. We would like to share those which follow with you.

The Editors

A BLUNDER TO HUMANIZE GOD

Some of the obvious problems that occur when humans personalize or humanize their concept of God is to give human attributes to Him. Since we as humans feel anger, righteous indignation, fear, jealousy, hatred, and all manner of negative emotions, we picture God reacting to us in a similar manner. Also, it has been proved by psychologists that human beings tend to relate to God, their Heavenly Father, in the same way they relate to their earthly fathers. Since God is given a male connotation, we relate to him as though he were a male figure. So if an individual had a challenging relationship with men, particularly an earthly father, or if one found that he or she could not depend on him, or had a lack of trust

in him, then it would be likely to transfer these same negative feelings of distrust, etc., to a relationship with the Heavenly Father. Very often this creates barriers to allowing a close personal relationship to develop between the person and the Heavenly Father because there is so much fear involved. If we instead understand that God is neither male nor female, and does not have our negative human reactions, this will help eliminate the fear and blockages we put up unconsciously.

If we believe that everything in the universe is happening due to universal laws which are self-acting and self-explanatory, and we reject the idea of a universal sovereign will, then we inhibit our chances of experiencing God's personal and deep abiding love for us, and the joy that relationship brings.

We need to ever leave our concept of God open to change and to evolve as we grow spiritually toward Him in our awareness. All of God's personal traits can be better understood by observing them as they were revealed in the life of Jesus while He dwelt among us.

—Debra York
Memphis, Tennessee

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STUPID TO MECHANIZE

I must admit that I have been stopped by this usual diction before. The use of the term, "stupid," seemed to me a little out of character for our unseen friends who, ordinarily, are so tactful and loving when referring to our state of lowly existence, limited intellectual endowments, and finite spirit comprehension. Part of what is "stupid" about mechanizing the concept of the First Source and Center must be, I think, in reference to what our friends have written in other parts of *The URANTIA Book*. For example, they tell us that the very ability of a human to suggest or construct a universal mechanistic philosophy of reality is already, self-evidently, and demonstrably performing an intellectual exercise which itself transcends the abilities, if any, of inanimate nature of totally mechanized world-view. We have all noticed how this obvious statement has escaped many of the physical nature students and theorizers of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Even today, the book following another by the same author, Fred Alan Wolf, is entitled *Star Wave* and it is an attempt to explain mental functions and consciousness itself in terms of physical mechanics. Wolf's earlier book, *Taking the Quantum Leap*, had won the Pulitzer Prize in non-fiction and was an explanation of the nature of quantum mechanics. Now this field of quantum theory is enshrouded in more mystery than ever relatively, but its central idea is that conscious examiners of nature distort and disorder physical reality in the very act of attempting to observe it. Thus, mechanistic philosophy is still with us.

Again the revelators write that while it would be a colossal blunder to humanize God, it would also be amiss to think of him as non-personal. To do so would be to demean the status of God to an "infrahuman" level. (That word is so much more accurate than "sub-human" which connotes primitive near-men mammals.) And this is true because even *man* is personal and possessed of a personality. This is a very unfortunate if not also "stupid" theory. Anyone who has experienced God has experienced love and the emanation of love could not possibly originate in a mechanism. Jesus once said, "money cannot love," and this dictum can be applied to the entire mechanistic universe. There is mechanism in the universe, but it is far from being all of the First Source and Center.

Perhaps the positivist philosophy originating in Locke and progressing through Berkeley, Hume and on into Comte and the 20th century positivists who teach that

we can say nothing with certainty except to describe that which our senses can detect, is partly responsible for the advent of mechanistic naturalism and ultimately of dialectical materialism as in the philosophy of Marx. But what do the midwayers write about this: "A new and fuller revelation of the religion of Jesus is destined to conquer an empire of materialistic secularism and to overthrow a world sway of mechanistic naturalism." (*2082:8) While it is true that there is mechanism in the universe, it is also true that all physical configurations are to be found in patterns the absolute of which is Paradise which, itself, is but a non-personal absolute expression of the Father-I AM. Given, however, a world and a universe of startling beauty, mind spheres of resilient truth, and personalities of astounding goodness, it does seem foolish, and perhaps "stupid," to give all these manifestations of the divine the standing and status of a nonpersonal mechanism, void of even its own appreciation of itself—not to mention the octillions of personal beings who inhabit the universe. Some passing penchant towards a possible materialist interpretation of reality might be excused if the individual was, perhaps intentionally, self-protected from truth and revelation. But our superiors in the universe, and perhaps we should join them, regard ignorance as no excuse for such a preposterous philosophy of the universe. May our friends deliver us from all such distortions!

—David Glass
Fort Worth, Texas

MEET RELIGIOUS CHALLENGE

To meet the religious challenge of this age it would first seem appropriate to distinguish between a religious and non-religious philosophy of living—the difference being in the nature of level of recognized values and in the object of loyalties, as pointed out by a Melchizedek: "There are four phases in the evolution of religious philosophy: Such as experience may become merely conformative, resigned to submission to tradition and authority. Or it may be satisfied with slight attainments, just enough to stabilize the daily living, and therefore becomes early arrested on such an adventitious level. Such mortals believe in letting well enough alone. A third group progress to the level of logical intellectuality but there stagnate in consequence of cultural slavery. It is indeed pitiful to behold giant intellects held so securely within the cruel grasp of cultural bondage. It is equally pathetic to observe those who

trade their cultural bondage for the materialistic fetters of a science, falsely so called. The fourth level of philosophy attains freedom from all conventional and traditional handicaps and dares to think, act, and live honestly, loyally, fearlessly, and truthfully." (*1114:3) The last sentence of this quote directly relates to the original question with regard to the construction of a "...new and appealing philosophy of living..." (*43:4). Both quotes use the verb *dare* which implies that the religious teachers of this age must have sufficient courage to implement this fourth level of philosophy.

Once it is determined that a religious philosophy of living is what the authors intend by their challenge, we can test it experientially as pointed out by this same Melchizedek: "The acid test for any religious philosophy consists in whether or not it distinguishes between the realities of the material and the spiritual worlds while at the same moment recognizing their unification in intellectual striving and in social serving." (*1114:4) This is further highlighted. "The highest attainable philosophy of mortal man must be logically based upon the reason of science, the faith of religion, and the truth insight afforded by revelation." (*1137:6)

The folly of adhering strictly to a non-religious philosophy of living is expressed strongly: "To build a philosophy of the universe on an exclusive materialism is to ignore the fact that all things material are initially conceived as real in the experience of human consciousness." (*1228:7)

In the paper on "Government on a Neighboring Planet," it was deemed important enough to pass on to us the view of those on the most advanced continent. "In their philosophy, religion is the striving to know God and to manifest love for one's fellows through service for them..." (*811:5)

This is pointed out in another way in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount ordination charge, "An effective philosophy of living is formed by a combination of cosmic insight and the total of one's emotional reactions to the social and economic environment." (*1572:8)

One would expect men and women of universe insight to construct their philosophy of living relationships with others to be based upon the golden rule. "Still others look upon it [the golden rule] as being the positive injunction of a great moral teacher who embodied in this statement the highest concept of moral obligations as regards all fraternal relationships. In the lives of such moral beings the golden rule becomes the wise center and circumference of all their philosophy." (*1950:2) Then, "...this golden rule takes on living

qualities of spiritual realization on those higher levels of interpretation which cause the mortal sons of God to view the injunction of the Master as requiring them so to relate themselves to their fellows that they will receive the highest good as a result of the believer's contact with them." (*1950:3)

In conclusion, the true children of spiritual discernment will continue to unify their personality around a religious philosophy of living. The religious teachers of this age will muster the necessary courage in order to think, act, and live honestly, loyally, fearlessly, and truthfully. By doing this we will be able to live the golden rule in such a way as to relate ourselves to our fellows so that our contact with them will insure that they receive the highest good from us. By embracing this type of philosophy we are recognizing the different realities of the spiritual and material worlds and unifying them in our personal intellectual striving and our social service. The spirit-led teachers today are committed to the adaption of their philosophy to the individual requirements and capacity of those with whom they come into contact by constantly adjusting these living relationships in accordance with the leading of the Spirit of Truth.

—James (II) Johnson
Saudi Arabia

ANOTHER QUESTION

Your responses to the questions posed in past issues have been wonderful — thoughtful, insightful — and we hope they have been of use to *Journal* readers. While we will keep publishing writings generated from past questions, here's another one to keep your mental energies stimulated. A Divine Counselor, writing in Paper 5 about God's relation to the individual, says:

"The material self has personality and identity, temporal identity; the pre-personal spirit Adjuster also has identity, eternal identity. This material personality and this spirit prepersonality are capable of so uniting their creative attributes as to bring into existence the surviving identity of the immortal soul." (*71:2)

Question

How are these creative attributes actually united?

*"When we are tempted to magnify our self-importance, if we stop to contemplate the infinity of the greatness and grandeur of our Makers, our own self-glorification becomes sublimely ridiculous, even verging on the humorous. One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego. (*549:3)*