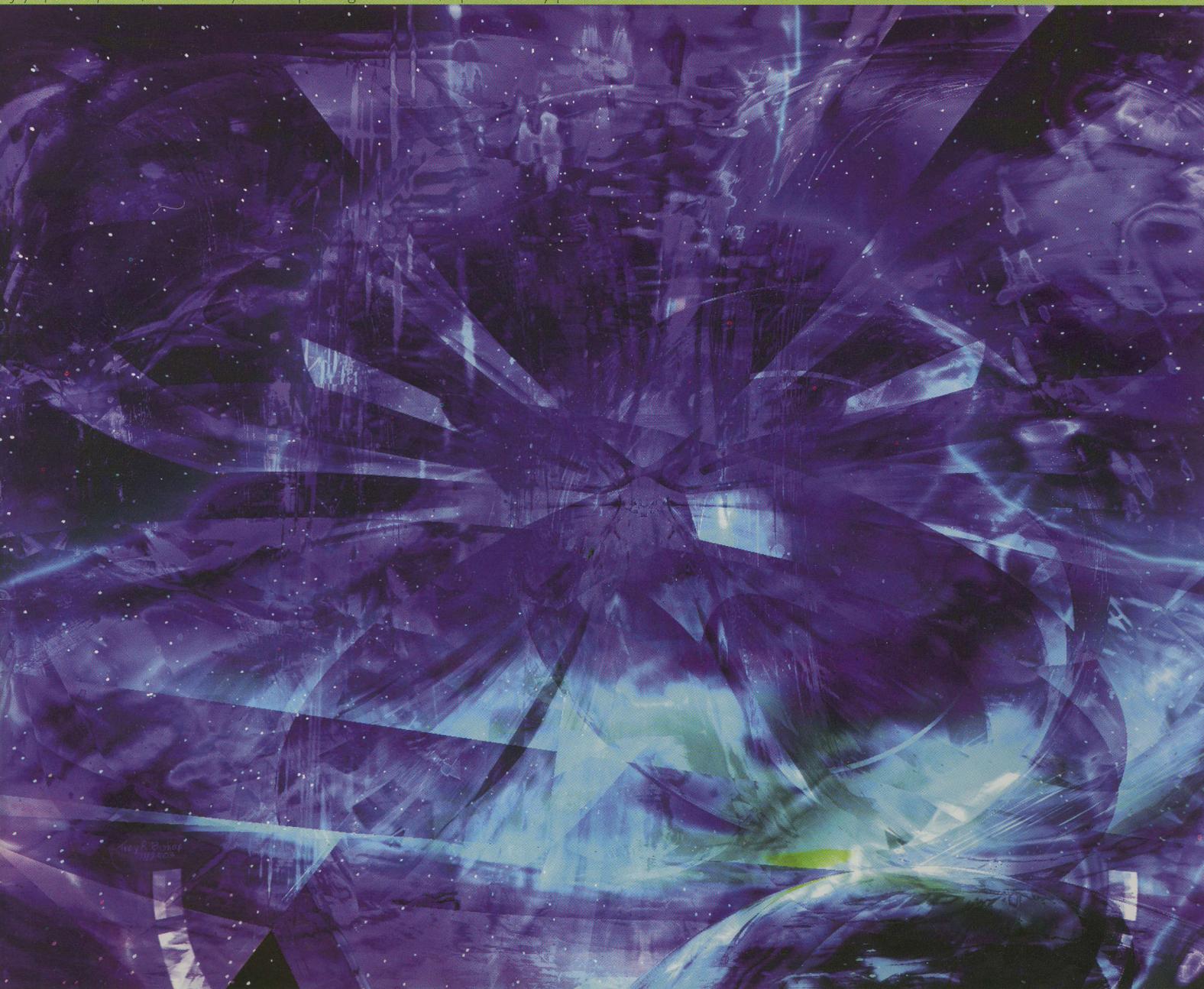


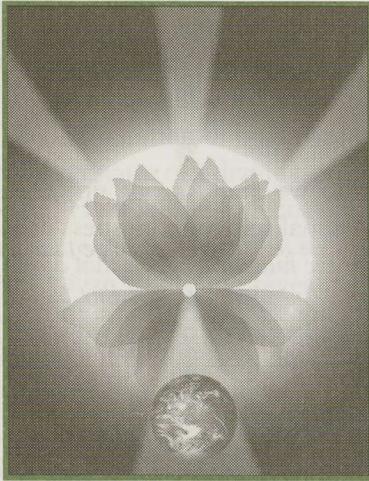
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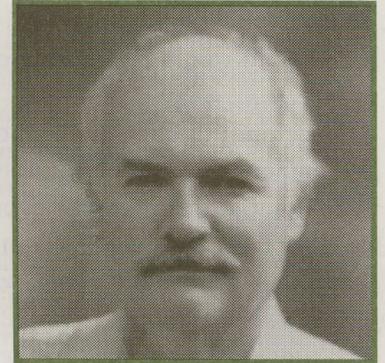


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Special belated thanks to **Patricia Fearey**, who designed the cover of our last issue. Pat has been active in the Urantia movement for many years, offering creative workshops and inspirational media productions for Urantia gatherings. She also designed the official logo for IC05.



Troy R. Bishop (this issue's cover artist) has been creating *Urantia Book*-oriented art since 1981. He began the early years of his career by creating graphic art to accompany his writings. Now he concentrates on creating 2D and 3D digital art of a genre he refers to as visionary digital art for online exhibition. His scientific background helps him to model and arrange artistic parameters in the computer in a way to infuse interrelated and higher meanings into the work. This includes a degree in physics, a career in computers, and several years as a professional inventor in light reflection and refraction techniques.

Through his art, Troy seeks to communicate the transcendent and the sublime, the true and the real. His most recent effort in this regard is his online audiovisionary presentation, *The Sacred Cycle*. This, and Troy's online art galleries, can be viewed at his Web site, *The Mystic Scientist*, at www.starspring.com.

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ILLUMINATION / TRANSFORMATION

By Doreen Heyne, Hamburg, NJ

During most of my research on the subject of illumination and transformation I found that great spiritualized minds think alike; there was more harmonized thinking than there were conflicting views to resolve.

Before I discuss illumination, transformation and enlightenment, I would like to consider wisdom, the seventh mind adjutant spirit gravity circuit; for wisdom is essential for awakening. We do not gain insight and wisdom from others, but from our own soul where God speaks to us saying, "This is the way." [34:7.8] (P. 383) A Mighty Messenger says concerning wisdom, "While we do not really know, we conjecture that there can never be a limit to intellectual evolution and attainment of wisdom." [55:6.5] (P. 631)

All religions recognize that wisdom is "the greatest good," and that those who acquire it receive it abundantly,

what we understand and who we are. As our universal consciousness is born, our personal self-consciousness dies. "But it is experience in and with the human religions that develops the capacity for subsequent reception of increased bestowals of divine wisdom and cosmic insight." [100:6.9] (P. 1101)

ILLUMINATION

One definition of "Illumination" is inward enlightenment. It does not mean perfection or power, only the process of awakening. It unfolds gradually by spiritual discoveries. I read that, "it is like two electric wires brought together to produce a spark and at the point of junction, it is the meeting of the lesser and the greater, (divine and human) which always expands the lesser. It is a flash of energy awareness. As you gain realization you discover the goodness of the world as an inner experience, and the world in the good."³

WISDOM RECOGNIZES THE MIND CAN BE CONTROLLED, TRANSFORMED, AND TRANSCENDED, AND THIS LEADS TO LOVE, HAPPINESS, ALTRUISM AND LIBERATION.

for knowledge only informs us, whereas wisdom transforms us. Wisdom explores and reflects on the nature of life, as when a person recognizes there must be a better way to live and strives to find it. Wisdom recognizes the mind can be controlled, transformed, and transcended, and this leads to love, happiness, altruism and liberation. It naturally finds expression in the compassionate service for others and leads us to live more harmoniously. Wisdom leads you to penetrate the nature of reality, recognizing your limitations, into the infinite mystery of our universe. Wisdom is everywhere, every person, situation, experience; but in silence is the wisdom that is beyond words. Father Thomas Keating said, "Silence, is the language God speaks and everything else is a bad translation."¹

A pupil asked a great teacher, "How do I find wisdom?" The teacher answered, "By good choices." "And how do I make good choices?" asked the pupil. "From experience," said the teacher. "And how do I get experience?" asked the student? "From bad choices," said the teacher.²

Truth brings to the wise person exactly what the wise person brings to truth. We interpret according to ourselves,

Enlightened persons show sensitivity, gentleness, simplicity, and humility. They cannot endure conflict within their personality. They cannot practice criticism and intolerance. Realization demands no change in others, only in yourself

"Those God-knowing men and women who have been born of the Spirit experience no more conflict with their mortal natures than do the inhabitants of the most normal of worlds, planets which have never been tainted with sin nor touched by rebellion. Faith sons work on intellectual levels and live on spiritual planes far above the conflicts produced by unrestrained or unnatural physical desires. The normal urges of animal beings and the natural appetites and impulses of the physical nature are not in conflict with even the highest spiritual attainment except in the minds of ignorant, mistaught, or unfortunately overconscientious persons." [34:7.7] (P. 383)

There are many questions as to what are the long-term and short-term effects? Is this experience the same as "being born again"? What is the process? What are the results? I will address these and other questions through some of the experiences of those who have been through

this state of profound insight into the nature of the universe or absolute truth.

Jakob Bohme, a German shoemaker, said in 1575, "The illumination of spirit was shed upon me, and I stood in the presence of a divine being. By a miraculous light I saw God."⁴ He was able to recognize God in everything, plants, grass, creatures, etc. In his second illumination his spiritual sight began to expand revealing to him divine truths. "My whole work on earth is nothing else but an instruction how man may create a kingdom of light within himself so open your eyes and see the world is full of God."⁵ His writings have inspired and influenced luminaries such as William Blake and Emanuel Swedenborg, among many others.

There are two realms of reality: the inner and the outer. The inner is not limited by space, time, or psychological laws, so it is timeless and eternal. At the core of our being is pure consciousness or spirit soul, the divine spark. When the mind is still and clear we can get glimpses of our core. "The kingdom of Heaven is within you," St. John of the Cross wrote, and no faculty of science can hope to reach it."⁶

The Christian contemplative, Thomas Merton, left a wonderful description of how other people appeared to him when he awoke from his vision. "Then it was as if I suddenly saw the sacred beauty of their hearts, the depths where neither sin nor desire can reach; the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only they could see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way, there would be no reason for war, for hatred, for cruelty, we would fall down and worship each other."⁷ "The discernment of supreme beauty is the discovery and integration of reality: The discern-

receive his music from divine inspiration. "I immediately feel vibrations that thrill my whole being, spirit illuminating the soul power within, and I realize at such moments the significance of Jesus' supreme revelation, 'I and my Father are one.'"⁸ Measure by measure the finished product is revealed to him.

How does one get to this place in consciousness? You get there by realizing you are there already and accept the impermanent nature of all things and conditions. That is where peace lies as well as grace, ease, and light. All things material will pass away, cycles will come and go. Enter the state of nonresistance. To live in the moment is the best moment.

The material mind dislikes the present moment, because it has no control over it. We can condition our minds to establish new mind patterns that allow us to live in the presence of God. Our future is created out of the present moment. The material world as it appears to us now is a reflection of the ego. Our collective reality is largely a symbolic expression of fear and negativity accumulated in the collective psyche. When we free ourselves from our ego delusion, the inner change will affect all of creation; perhaps a shift in the consciousness of the planet.

"Matter and spirit and the state intervening between them are three interrelated and interassociated levels of the true unity of the real universe. Regardless of how divergent the universe phenomena of fact and value may appear to be, they are, after all, unified in the Supreme.

Reality of material existence attaches to unrecognized energy as well as to visible matter. When the energies of the universe are so slowed down that they acquire the requisite degree

"IF ONLY THEY COULD SEE THEMSELVES AS THEY REALLY ARE. IF ONLY WE COULD SEE EACH OTHER THAT WAY, THERE WOULD BE NO REASON FOR WAR, FOR HATRED, FOR CRUELTY, WE WOULD FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP EACH OTHER." THOMAS MERTON

ment of the divine goodness in the eternal truth, that is ultimate beauty. Even the charm of human art consists in the harmony of its unity." [2:7.8] (P. 43)

What does it mean to discover pure consciousness? Is this the recognition of the inseparability of spirit and material mind manifesting the unity of the inner and outer, personal and transpersonal, sacred and profane, God and self? What did Jesus mean when he said, "I and my Father are one"? The composer Johannes Brahms would sometimes

of motion, then, under favorable conditions, these same energies become mass. And forget not, the mind which can alone perceive the presence of apparent realities is itself also real. And the fundamental cause of this universe of energy-mass, mind, and spirit, is eternal—it exists and consists in the nature and reactions of the Universal Father and his absolute co-ordinates." [133:5.9-10] (P. 1477)

Enlightenment consciously chosen means to relinquish your attachment to the past and future and live in the now.

TRANSFORMATION

Is becoming more compassionate, honest, humble, and charitable a sign of healthy spiritual transformation? Could it be brought on by lack of oxygen in the blood? What about carbon dioxide increase? That only produces experiences which are limited, confused, and disorganized. What about near-death experiences? Well, the mechanism that produces those experiences would happen to all people under the same influence if it were deprivation.

When endorphins are released in the brain or morphine is taken, a feeling of bliss and euphoria occur, but it does not explain why so few people have near death experiences when the endorphins are raised. You don't become enlightened through "out-of-body" or psychic experiences, but it does give you a glimpse of the state of liberation from the body.

Yvonne Kason, M.D. states that this transformative energy or force is almost always symbolized by light or fire.⁹ Some of the signs are sensations of energy, heat, light, inner sound like buzzing bees or the roar of a waterfall, all pervasive luminosity, or white light. For some, like Paul of Damascus, it was instantaneous; for others it was over long periods of time, or perhaps only one experience. Transformed people usually have a far more spiritual focus and ethical conviction, and are involved in altruistic and humanitarian endeavors.

Albert Einstein wrote in *The World As I See It*, "I maintain that the cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest insight to scientific research."¹⁰ Many who have studied and experienced cosmic consciousness hypothesize that perennial cosmic consciousness would represent the next major evolutionary step for the entire human race. Science might someday come to recognize this energy as the biological-psychological-spiritual mechanism for spiritual transformation experience.

In "blinding flashes of light," detailed plans for many inventions were received by Nikola Tesla, the greatest inventor of the 20th century. He realized his abilities and ideas

"Kundalini" or spiritual energy, in varying degrees can leave you more intelligent, perceptive, with expanded consciousness, peaceful, and so on. He said that although some people think the transformative experience comes with a lack of oxygen in the brain or overactive imagination, it actually leads to greater insight, self understanding, clarity, self realization, and creativity.¹¹

A Catholic Saint, Hildegard of Bingen, was divinely inspired in 1098 to write books on natural history, medicine, and morality; She also painted and composed music. She wrote that she constantly experienced a vision of what she called a reflection of the "living light."

A pilot study described in *A Farther Shore* showed the following about individuals who experienced spiritual transformation or awakening:¹²

1. The fear of death is gone.
 2. In most cases, the experience changes the individuals' lives positively.
 3. Love permeates everything; there are feelings of unconditional love.
 4. Most people wanted to stay in the light, but they were told to return.
 5. The experience stays crystal clear in memory for the rest of life.
 6. It happens to people who are religious as well as atheists, and people who do not care about death or the hereafter.
 7. A gravity force pulls the individual through a tunnel towards light and sends him or her back with a gravity force.
 8. Individuals experience feelings of unity, objectivity and reality, and transcendence of time and space.
 9. Language is inadequate to express the experience.
 10. Individuals see other beings of light, angels, Christ, relatives.
 11. It could happen during unconsciousness, which indicates the mind is separate from the brain.
- Yeats describes this experience in "Vacillation."

AS HUNGER AND THIRST ARISE SPONTANEOUSLY, SO DOES LONGING FOR GOD. IT IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF TIME.

came to him from a reality beyond the physical. *The Urantia Book* indicates, "the creative human imagination is comparatively time free." [12:5.5] (P 135). The more we identify with spirit, the less responsive we are to time and space.

The Indian Yogi, Gopi-Krishna, said after many years of study observing the transformative process, that

Have we concentrated too much on developing our logical mind, while allowing the spirit consciousness to atrophy?

In *Essential Spirituality*, Roger Walsh asks, "What happens to us when we get stuck in attachments and cravings that satisfy our emotions and not our soul? We fall into il-

lusion and forget our spiritual nature. Attachments swell, satisfactions shrink." He does not say we should give up the pleasures, only the attachments to them. "Enlightenment or realization destroys the cravings otherwise we would suffer from divine homesickness and discontent."¹³

Ramakrishna's personal experience was, "As hunger and thirst arise spontaneously, so does longing for God. It is simply a matter of time. Yearning for God cannot arise until one has to some extent satisfied the desires of social existence or has seen through them and been freed from them. The constant quest for egocentric pleasure not only defrauds you of your birthright, but mere pleasure seeking inevitably produces suffering for yourself and others."¹⁴

No one knows when, why, or how the light comes. It may come when you begin to discover the realization of the reason for living; maybe through perseverance and effort. It is not discovered through the senses, nor the intellect but only through communion with the spirit. Light enters and in a second is gone, but the consequences are profound and lasting. It is a certainty and you cannot convey it to any other person. Don't hope or wonder or wait for it. If you desire it, it will never happen.

It happens through the natural process of worship and wisdom otherwise it is hallucination, not illumination. "In knowledge alone there can never be absolute certainty, only increasing probability of approximation; but the religious soul of spiritual illumination knows, and knows now." [102:2.4] (P. 1120)

It takes a lot of courage to live up to your convictions. When you discover truth it may bring you enlightenment, but along with it comes responsibilities. As enlightenment increases, the desire to share it increases, and that becomes very difficult as many have discovered when we found *The Urantia Book*.

Thomas Troward said, "We touch the face of God when we reach that indescribable reciprocity of feeling by which we instinctively recognize something in another, making it kin to ourselves. When the individual conscious mind comes into direct contact with universal mind, cosmic intelligence becomes individualized and individual intelligence becomes universalized. The two become one. I am the person that thou art, and thou art the person that I am."¹⁵

The composer with his unfinished symphony, the artist with his unfinished canvas, the poet with his unfinished verses, the scientist with his unfinished experiments—each one exhausted their ability to proceed without help, all sincerely looking for a solution. A surrendering of self then leads to a divine cosmic light (intelligence) which begins to

reveal to them the answer.

Without consecration and perseverance there can be no illumination.

"Most of the spectacular phenomena associated with so-called religious conversions are entirely psychologic in nature, but now and then there do occur experiences which are also spiritual in origin. When the mental mobilization is absolutely total on any level of the psychic upheaval toward spirit attainment, when there exists perfection of the human motivation of loyalties to the divine idea, then there very often occurs a sudden down-grasp of the indwelling spirit to synchronize with the concentrated and consecrated purpose of the superconscious mind of the believing mortal. And it is such experiences of unified intellectual and spiritual phenomena that constitute the conversion which consists in factors over and above purely psychologic involvement." [100:5.4] (P. 1099)

Doreen Heyne found *The Urantia Book* in the mid 1980s, and is currently serving as Secretary-General of The Urantia Book Fellowship. She divides her time between New Jersey and Florida and her passion is to strive to be a better human being through loving service.

(Endnotes)

¹ Roger Walsh, *Essential Spirituality*, (John Wiley & Sons, 1999), p. 44.

² Roger Walsh, *Essential Spirituality*, (John Wiley & Sons, 1999).

³ Carol Dommermuth-Costa, *Nikola Tesla: A Spark of Genius*, (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 1994).

⁴ Dan Millman and Doug Childers, *Divine Interventions: True Stories of Mystery and Miracles That Change Lives*, (Emmaus, PA: Rodale Press, 1999).

⁵ Dan Millman and Doug Childers, *Divine Interventions: True Stories of Mystery and Miracles That Change Lives*, (Emmaus, PA: Rodale Press, 1999).

⁶ Roger Walsh, *Essential Spirituality*, (John Wiley & Sons, 1999), p. 8.

⁷ Jack Kornfield, *A Path with Heart: A Guide Through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life* (Bantam, 1993) p. 311.

⁸ Lucinda Vardey, *God in All Worlds: An Anthology of Contemporary Spiritual Writing* (Pantheon Books, 1995).

⁹ Yvonne Kason, M.D., *Farther Shore: How Near-Death and Other Extraordinary Experiences Can Change Ordinary Lives*, (DIANE Publishing Co, June 1994).

¹⁰ Albert Einstein, *The World As I See It*, (Citadel Trade, Reissue edition July 1993)

¹¹ Gopi-Krishna, *Kundalini: The Evolutionary Energy in Man*, (Shambhala, 1997).

¹² Yvonne Kason, M.D., *Farther Shore: How Near-Death and Other Extraordinary Experiences Can Change Ordinary Lives*, (DIANE Publishing Co, June 1994).

¹³ Roger Walsh, *Essential Spirituality*, (John Wiley & Sons, 1999), p. 179.

¹⁴ Swami Chetanananda, *God Lived With Them: Life Stories of Sixteen Monastic Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna* (Vedanta Society of St Louis: 1997).

¹⁵ Thomas Troward, *The Edinburgh Lectures on Mental Science*, (1904)



An Essay On Hope

By David Kantor, Denver, CO

Last year I was invited to speak to a group of readers in an Eastern European country. When I asked the host about a topic he said, "Life is so depressed here, please tell us something about hope." This essay, then, is about hope in the context of daily life—not about metaphysical or intellectual abstractions. It is about an important element of the psychological, social and spiritual struggles that we encounter in daily life.

As we consider the nature of hope, we will also consider some additional attitudes that are related to hope: doubt, despair, and faith. In fact, it might be helpful to consider these four elements as parts of a spectrum. Our basic attitude toward life can be centered at any point on this spectrum, from despair at one end to living spiritual faith at the other end. Fear moves us toward despair and our ideals draw us in the direction of hope and faith.

It is likely that we most often find ourselves somewhere in the middle here, moving between hope and doubt. Those of you with a strong experience of faith will likely be somewhere between a sure grasp of faith, sometimes consisting only of hope. If you often find yourself dominated by feelings of despair, I urge you to spend more time in prayer and worship, so that you might find the hope and faith you need in order to live more fully and more productively.

ONE OF THE GREAT GIFTS WHICH WE RECEIVE BY READING *THE URANTIA BOOK* IS THE RADICAL EXPANSION OF OUR TIME HORIZON TO ENCOMPASS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISTANT PAST AS WELL AS INSIGHTS INTO THE DISTANT FUTURE.

The book tells us that, "Mortal man earns even his status as an ascension candidate by his own faith and hope." [3:5.16] (P. 52)

Hope may be thought of as a positive attitude toward future possibilities. In the attitude of hope we imagine that some ideal state will be a reality in the future. Thus our ideals also play an important role in sustaining hope.

"... truth can never become man's possession without the exercise of faith. This is true because man's thoughts, wisdom, ethics, and ideals will never rise higher than his faith, his sublime hope. And all such true faith is predicated on profound reflection, sincere self-criticism, and uncompromising moral consciousness.

Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination." [132:3.5] (P. 1459)

"The ideals of the race are the chief support and assurance during the critical times when civilization is in transit from one level to another." [81:6.40] (P. 911)

When we talk about hope there are many goals toward which our hope might be directed.

- Hope for personal health.
- Hope for the success of some personal undertaking.
- Hope for the well-being of our families.
- Hope for the future of our children.
- Hope for the success of the Urantia revelation.
- Hope for personal salvation.
- Hope for life after death.
- Hope for our world.

It should be noted that in each of these examples there is a time horizon—a time in the future for which we hope that some particular outcome will have occurred. Some of these horizons are closer to the present day than others. Some exist beyond the end of our lives here in this world. *The Urantia Book* contains a comment that I believe directly relates to this.

"There is a direct relationship between maturity and the unit of time consciousness in any given intellect. The time unit

may be a day, a year, or a longer period, but inevitably it is the criterion by which the conscious self evaluates the circumstances of life, and by which the conceiving intellect measures and evaluates the facts of temporal existence." [118:1.3] (P. 1295)

"In the maturity of the developing self, the past and future are brought together to illuminate the true meaning of the present. As the self matures, it reaches further and further back into the past for experience, while its wisdom forecasts seek to penetrate deeper and deeper into the unknown future. And as the conceiving self extends this reach ever further into both past and future, so does judgment become less and less dependent on the momentary present. In this way does decision-action begin to es-

cape from the fetters of the moving present, while it begins to take on the aspects of past-future significance." [118:1.5] (P. 1295)

Here the authors are talking about the time horizon that we use to evaluate our lives. But they have more to say about this on pages 1295-96 [118:1.6-9]

"Patience is exercised by those mortals whose time units are short; true maturity transcends patience by a forbearance born of real understanding."

"To become mature is to live more intensely in the present, at the same time escaping from the limitations of the present. The plans of maturity, founded on past experience, are coming into being in the present in such manner as to enhance the values of the future."

"The time unit of immaturity concentrates meaning-value into the present moment in such a way as to divorce the present of its true relationship to the not-present—the past-future. The time unit of maturity is proportioned so to reveal the co-ordinate relationship of past-present-future that the self begins to gain insight into the wholeness of events, begins to view the landscape of time from the panoramic perspective of broadened horizons."

I bring this passage to your attention because I think it relates directly to the time horizon of our hopes. If our time units are short and we cannot envision life beyond the turbulence of the present world situation, we are likely to become pessimistic, or even fall into despair. It is important to think in longer time units and to focus our hopes out into the future beyond the present turbulence. In this way we can find strength to work in the present for a better future situation.

One of the great gifts which we receive by reading *The Urantia Book* is the radical expansion of our time horizon to encompass an understanding of the distant past as well as insights into the distant future. This should help us to work more effectively in the present moment, in the present situation.

The book tells us that, "*The true perspective of any reality problem—human or divine, terrestrial or cosmic—can be had only by the full and unprejudiced study and correlation of three phases of universe reality: origin, history, and destiny. The proper understanding of these three experiential realities affords the basis for a wise estimate of the current status.*" [19:1.6] (P. 215)

The Urantia Book gives us many of the tools we need to evaluate our situation relative to cosmic reality and take actions that will be truly helpful within this expanded context.

When I look at the present world situation and feel overwhelmed by the difficulties and complexities of it, I am reminded of Adam and Eve and their experience. Following

is a passage found on pages 839-840 [75:1.4-7] describing Adam and Eve's view of planetary problems.

"Adam and Eve found themselves on a sphere wholly unprepared for the proclamation of the brotherhood of man, a world groping about in abject spiritual darkness and cursed with confusion worse confounded by the miscarriage of the mission of the preceding administration. Mind and morals were at a low level, and instead of beginning the task of effecting religious unity, they must begin all anew the work of converting the inhabitants to the most simple forms of religious belief. Instead of finding one language ready for adoption, they were confronted by the world-wide confusion of hundreds upon hundreds of local dialects. No Adam of the planetary service was ever set down on a more difficult world; the obstacles seemed insuperable and the problems beyond creature solution."

"They were isolated, and the tremendous sense of loneliness which bore down upon them was all the more heightened by the early departure of the Melchizedek receivers. Only indirectly, by means of the angelic orders, could they communicate with any being off the planet. Slowly their courage weakened, their spirits drooped, and sometimes their faith almost faltered."

"And this is the true picture of the consternation of these two noble souls as they pondered the tasks which confronted them. They were both keenly aware of the enormous undertaking involved in the execution of their planetary assignment."

"Probably no Material Sons of Nebadon were ever faced with such a difficult and seemingly hopeless task as confronted Adam and Eve in the sorry plight of Urantia. But they would have sometime met with success had they been more farseeing and patient. Both of them, especially Eve, were altogether too impatient; they were not willing to settle down to the long, long endurance test."

Here we have a clear example of hope being lost when a time horizon is not appropriate to the magnitude of the undertaking. Adam and Eve wanted to see results in a much shorter time frame than was possible given the situation in which they found themselves.

If you look at the situation in the world and feel overwhelmed, or if you feel you are losing hope, think about this story of Adam and Eve. Here we have a story about super-human beings with extensive education and background who became disoriented by the magnitude of the problems in this world. If this could happen to them, then I shouldn't feel so badly when I find myself struggling.

But since the time of Adam and Eve we have also had Jesus experiencing life on this world and we have his life as an example of how to move forward creatively during times of extreme difficulty when all hope appears to be lost.

It is helpful to consider the time horizon that Jesus

used during his mortal life. His focus was on working in the present for the future appearance of the "kingdom of Heaven." He held within his mind an understanding of the true destiny of humanity. I believe that this is our challenge today. We must cultivate an understanding of this destiny. We must develop ways of working in our daily lives that will enable us to work creatively for the realization of that destiny.

One of our challenges is to strengthen hope to the point where it becomes living faith. When I find myself moving from a position of hope to a position of doubt and despair, I remind myself of several comments that the revellers make.

WITHOUT HOPE, WITHOUT IDEALS, WITHOUT A VISION OF A BETTER AND MORE MEANINGFUL FUTURE, WE BECOME PARALYZED IN OUR ABILITY TO TAKE POSITIVE CREATIVE ACTION IN THE WORLD.

"But mistake not! these compromised ideals of the Master are still latent in his gospel, and they will eventually assert their full power upon the world." [195:0.12] (P. 2070)

". . . no matter what blunders your fellow men make in their world management of today, in an age to come the gospel which I declare to you will rule this very world. The ultimate goal of human progress is the reverent recognition of the fatherhood of God and the loving materialization of the brotherhood of man." [143:1.4] (P. 1608)

I find that reviewing these passages helps me to mobilize my hopes in the direction of faith and to overcome the tendency to slide into despair. I believe these statements are true, and it is this belief which sometimes saves me.

If we have hope for the long-term outcome of humanity's evolutionary adventure on this planet, we become empowered to work toward the achievement of that distant goal.

One of the enemies of hope is the thought that our vision of the future, our vision of the kingdom of heaven, our values, and our hopes are simply images created by our creative imaginations, images that the mind creates in order to give us a sense of stability and purpose. *The Urantia Book* addresses this issue in an eloquent passage on page 1118:

"To the unbelieving materialist, man is simply an evolutionary accident. His hopes of survival are strung on a figment of mortal imagination; his fears, loves, longings, and beliefs are but the reaction of the incidental juxtaposition of certain lifeless atoms of matter. No display of energy nor expression of trust can carry him beyond the grave. The devotional labors and inspira-

tional genius of the best of men are doomed to be extinguished by death, the long and lonely night of eternal oblivion and soul extinction. Nameless despair is man's only reward for living and toiling under the temporal sun of mortal existence. Each day of life slowly and surely tightens the grasp of a pitiless doom which a hostile and relentless universe of matter has decreed shall be the crowning insult to everything in human desire which is beautiful, noble, lofty, and good.

"But such is not man's end and eternal destiny; such a vision is but the cry of despair uttered by some wandering soul who has become lost in spiritual darkness, and who bravely struggles on in the face of the mechanistic sophistries of a material philosophy, blinded by the confusion and distortion of a complex

learning. And all this doom of darkness and all this destiny of despair are forever dispelled by one brave stretch of faith on the part of the most humble and unlearned of God's children on earth." [102:0.1,2]

Without hope, without ideals, without a vision of a better and more meaningful future, we become paralyzed in our ability to take positive creative action in the world. If we do not have a vision of an ideal state that we are trying to achieve, how can we expect to make wise decisions in daily life?

The past century has seen an increase in the world of philosophical positions that say that our hopes are simply psychological illusions. Religious beliefs have been portrayed as unjustifiable opinions. Some philosophers have gone so far as to deny the existence of knowledge and truth. Values are portrayed as simply arising from emotional and social pressures. The world is understood to exist without meaning or purpose. From this perspective, passionate commitment to anything—relationships, religious perspectives, political ideologies—is not only useless, but indicative of serious mental illness. Indeed, during the times of the Soviet Union, people with strong religious convictions were placed in mental hospitals for treatment. This is still happening today in China.

The book says, "Scientists have unintentionally precipitated mankind into a materialistic panic; they have started an unthinking run on the moral bank of the ages, but this bank of human experience has vast spiritual resources; it can stand the demands being made upon it. Only unthinking men become

panicky about the spiritual assets of the human race. When the materialistic-secular panic is over, the religion of Jesus will not be found bankrupt. The spiritual bank of the kingdom of heaven will be paying out faith, hope, and moral security to all who draw upon it "in His name." [195:6.1] (P. 2076)

We are also told that, "There is but one struggle for those who enter the kingdom, and that is to fight the good fight of faith. The believer has only one battle, and that is against doubt—unbelief." [159:3.8] (P. 1766)

I believe that when the authors of the book refer to "doubt" in this context, they are referring to that doubt which leads us to believe that our ideals and values are self-created abstractions which have no real meaning or value outside of our own subjective lives.

What is missing in these nihilistic assessments of the inner life is a recognition of the presence of the Thought Adjuster and the role which this fragment of divinity plays in the organizing and directing of the mortal mind. Consider the following: "Circle by circle your intellectual decisions, moral choosings, and spiritual development add to the ability of the Adjuster to function in your mind; circle by circle you thereby ascend from the lower stages of Adjuster association and mind attunement, so that the Adjuster is increasingly enabled to register his picturizations of destiny with augmenting vividness and conviction upon the evolving consciousness of this God-seeking mind-soul." [110:6.5] (P. 1209)

Many elements of our ideals and hopes may indeed be traced to social and psychological sources. Many of our beliefs and values are relative to our economic and social situation. But it is essential that we appreciate the role of the Thought Adjuster in our inner lives.

This pre-personal fragment of divinity exists within the mortal mind and constantly attempts to orient the personality toward eternal realities. The result, in the mind of a person yielding to this influence, is a gradual emergence of a consciousness of universe reality. The mind begins to function relative to ideals and hopes that resonate with spiritual values. In this context, the work of the Adjuster in the mortal mind may be understood as being analogous to the working of a gyroscope in a ship or an airplane. It is a mechanism providing orientation and a sense of direction physical in the case of the ship or airplane, spiritual in the case of the mortal mind. On page 1182 the Adjuster is described as the prisoner of spirit hope confined within the mortal mind.

I believe the authors of *The Urantia Book* have captured the essence of this situation with the quote on page 2096 which says, "In the realm of religious experience, spiritual possibility is potential reality. Man's forward spiritual urge is not a psychic illusion. All of man's universe romancing may not be

fact, but much, very much, is truth." [196:3.28] (P. 2096)

The stories and beliefs propagated by various religions have great value because they provide believers with a meaningful context within which values may be discovered and wise decisions may be made. On page 1011 the authors comment that, "At one time the hope of the survival of Occidental civilization lay in the sublime Hebraic concepts of goodness and the advanced Hellenic concepts of beauty." [92:6.6] On page 1041 they note that, "At the time of this writing much of Asia rests its hope in Buddhism." [94:12.6] Clearly, the authors place great value on the importance of religious stories and beliefs.

And regarding our world as a whole they say, "The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present-day professed followers." [195:10.16] (P. 2086)

Jesus said of himself, "I am the hope of all who know the living truth."

During mortal life, the quest for cosmic citizenship involves strengthening hope to the point where it becomes living faith. We may not be able to grasp many of the details about how the cosmos works, but through faith we can know it as good, creative, and loving.

The journey of the truth seeker often begins with asking questions about the nature of reality. But over time the focus invariably shifts from questions about knowing to questions about being. The primary question becomes, "How can I live effectively and creatively in this universe how can I contribute to its further development?"

On page 2076 we are reminded, "As you view the world, remember that the black patches of evil which you see are shown against a white background of ultimate good. You do not view merely white patches of good which show up miserably against a black background of evil." [195:5.12]

A situation in Jesus' life, during the years when he was helping Mary raise the children, illustrates his sense of the power of hope:

"For four years their standard of living had steadily declined; year by year they felt the pinch of increasing poverty. By the close of this year they faced one of the most difficult experiences of all their uphill struggles. James had not yet begun to earn much, and the expenses of a funeral on top of everything else staggered them. But Jesus would only say to his anxious and grieving mother: "Mother-Mary, sorrow will not help us; we are all doing our best, and mother's smile, perchance, might even inspire us to do better. Day by day we are strengthened for these tasks by our hope of better days ahead." His sturdy and practi-

cal optimism was truly contagious; all the children lived in an atmosphere of anticipation of better times and better things. And this hopeful courage contributed mightily to the development of strong and noble characters, in spite of the depressiveness of their poverty. [127:3.14] (P. 1400)

The real spiritual challenge we face is the strengthening of hope to the point where it becomes faith. Hope is somewhat tentative—we hope for some particular reality but we are not completely sure of it. The attitude of faith declares that the object of our hopes is indeed real. Living faith empowers us to live loyally to our highest ideals in the present moment.

“... living faith in the superhuman origin of our ideals validates our belief that we are the sons of God and makes real our altruistic convictions, the feelings of the brotherhood of man.” [103:5.9] (P. 1134)

“It is only natural that mortal man should be harassed by feelings of insecurity as he views himself inextricably bound to nature while he possesses spiritual powers wholly transcendent to all things temporal and finite. Only religious confidence—living faith—can sustain man amid such difficult and perplexing problems.” [111:6.8] (P.1222)

But let us not be so limited in our perspective that we view this cultivation of hope and faith as merely a strategy to avoid anxiety. If we are able to transmute our hope into living faith, we should thereby be empowered to serve others. There are many places in the story of Jesus where the authors comment that he often “spoke comforting words of hope and courage” to the people he encountered in the course of his daily life. We can do this as well. Anything you can do to relieve suffering and anxiety in the lives of people around you is a direct contribution to the healing of our world.

The book says that, “The religion of Jesus is a new gospel of faith to be proclaimed to struggling humanity. This new religion is founded on faith, hope, and love.” [194:3.2] (P. 2063)

“... when religion is wholly spiritual in motive, it makes all life more worth while, filling it with high purposes, dignifying it with transcendent values, inspiring it with superb motives, all the while comforting the human soul with a sublime and sustaining hope. True religion is designed to lessen the strain of existence; it releases faith and courage for daily living and unselfish serving. Faith promotes spiritual vitality and righteous fruitfulness.” [155:3.7] (P. 1727)

Please note in this last quote the comment that “True religion . . . releases faith and courage for daily living and unselfish serving.” Meaningful service is the frontier we find beyond the horizon of faith.

“The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new

revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present-day professed followers.” [195: 10.16] (P. 2086)

The great hope of our world is that this revelation will so strengthen and motivate its recipients that they will mobilize themselves into a force for service to humanity. And this service should not be viewed as some large-scale, grandiose plan. It is a mode of service that must be directed locally within our families, communities, places of work, and places of worship. It is not an approach that seeks to create social order by imposing ideological uniformity on society. It is an approach that seeks to transform the world by spiritually transforming the lives of individuals.

There is much to be done. Let's get to work!

David Kantor has been a reader since 1968. He manages The Fellowship's internet services and is Chair of the International Fellowship Committee.



The Soul's Expression

With stammering lips and insufficient sound
I strive and struggle to deliver right
That music of my nature, day and night
With dream and thought and feeling interwound,
And inly answering all the senses round
With octaves of a mystic depth and height
Which step out grandly to the infinite
From the dark edges of the sensual ground.
This song of soul I struggle to outbear
Through portals of the sense, sublime and whole,
And utter all myself into the air;
But if I did it, as the thunder roll
Breaks its own cloud, my flesh would perish there,
Before that dread apocalypse of soul.

~Elizabeth Barrett Browning

The Rise of Spiritual Technology

By Richard S. Omura, Los Angeles, CA

At first presented in 2003 as a workshop at *The Urantia Book* Fellowship Summer Study Session at East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania, the purpose of this tract is not only to validate the truths in *The Urantia Book* and the meanings and values it has in our lives, but to actually suggest ways to use these nuggets of information for enriching and facilitating our spiritual growth. *The Urantia Book* is taken metaphorically as a treasure map and the only criteria we will use for verifying the truth and validity of the map is its ability to lead us to the treasure. The “treasure” in the case of *The Urantia Book*, or any spiritual path for that matter, are the truths in it that will enable us to exhibit in our lives the “fruits of the spirit.” (Also online at: www.RichardOmura.com/st)

WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT?

“... for the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.” [34: 6.13] (P. 381)

“And the fruits of the divine spirit which are yielded in the lives of spirit-born and God-knowing mortals are: loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace.” [193:2.2] (P. 2054)

Note that the above are lists of characteristics that are described as the “fruits of the spirit.” The list is arguably not exclusive or exhaustive in that there definitely are more such characteristics that can be listed. What we have below, however, is a simple definition of the “fruits”:

“If, then, my children, you are born of the spirit, you are forever delivered from the self-conscious bondage of a life of self-denial and watchcare over the desires of the flesh, and you are translated into the joyous kingdom of the spirit, whence you spontaneously show forth the fruits of the spirit in your daily lives; and the fruits of the spirit are the essence of the highest type of enjoyable and ennobling self-control, even the heights of terrestrial mortal attainment—true self-mastery.” [143:2.8] (P. 1610)

Obviously, there are many facts and truths in *The Urantia Book* that cannot be proven here and now, for example, the cosmology, the afterlife, celestial agencies and personalities, and so on. If they are real, we will certainly know later on in our universe career. However, there is information in

the book that can be applied right now in our daily lives to effectively stimulate spiritual growth.

This information, the truths, are not the fruits themselves, but by their “nutrition” we can nurture the spiritual qualities of our lives. The application of these truths and the creating of systems and methods that we can use as vehicles for soul growth I term spiritual technology.

Searching the internet, there are many uses of the term *spiritual technology*. For the purposes of this article I will define my usage of this phrase and explain how the concepts in *The Urantia Book* regarding things, meanings, and values influenced me in seeing its appropriateness.

The following chart details how *things* lead to *meanings* which results in the realization of values and the process of creating new working systems for personal and interpersonal transformation and soul growth.

From Things, Meanings, and Values to Technology, Government, and Service

| THINGS | MEANINGS | VALUES |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Body | Mind | Soul |
| Fact | Idea | Spirit |
| Mathematical/Logic | Mind-Reason | Spirit-Faith |
| Causation | Duty | Worship |
| Science | Philosophy | Religion |

By applying the above, we create the following systems:

| TECHNOLOGY | LAW & ORDER/ GOVERNMENT | SPIRITUAL RELATIONS/ SERVICE |
|------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | |

- New facts from science will give birth to new technology.
- New philosophical thoughts will result in a new code of conduct.
- New spiritual truths will give rise to new ways of living and serving.

Science is the institution that we created for the study of things; applied science is technology, which has enabled us to live more comfortable lives, at least, materially. Philosophy we created for discovering meanings; applied philosophy results in laws, government, and societal mores, which has made possible an orderly society. Religion is a human institution for ascertaining values. True religion ap-

plied is service and relationships based on spiritual values. Service makes the world a better place and exemplifies self-forgetfulness and giving, as well as manifesting in activity the assurance of oneness with the universe.

As we gain more facts about things, our science progresses with corresponding advances in technology. As more meanings are discovered through philosophy, our rules for living are made better. So logically, the more truths are discovered in religion, the more advanced our service to humanity should become. *The Urantia Book* reveals many new truths to us. How have these truths contributed toward better service? How can we go about using these truths in *The Urantia Book* to create newer and better ways to do service and further education, art and the humanities?

SPIRITUAL TECHNOLOGY

We can use the truths from *The Urantia Book* to create new spiritual technology. But what is spiritual technology? First of all, what is the definition of technology?

“tech·nol·o·gy 1.a. The application of science, especially to industrial or commercial objectives. b. The scientific method and material used to achieve a commercial or industrial objective. 2. Electronic or digital products and systems considered as a group: *a store specializing in office technology*. 3. *Anthropology*. The body of knowledge available to a society that is of use in fashioning implements, practicing manual arts and skills, and extracting or collecting materials.” [The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000.]

I will define spiritual technology for the purposes of this article.

Spiritual Technology: The body of knowledge, wisdom, and truth available to a civilization that is of use in fashioning methods of spiritual growth, practicing spiritual arts and skills, and seeking higher values of spiritual attainment.

- As material technology is the manipulation of the physical world, spiritual technology is the manipulation of the person’s inner world.

- Material technology gives us the comforts of material prosperity. Spiritual technology gives the comforts of spiritual prosperity.

- The facts of science can be validated by creating material technology that changes external reality. Spiritual truths can be validated by creating spiritual technology that changes internal reality.

We can find the truths in *The Urantia Book* and from those truths create or discover ways to apply them to the inner workings of our daily life in order to reap the “fruits of the spirit.”

EXAMPLES OF SPIRITUAL TECHNOLOGY

Mental techniques and psychology may or may not be spiritual technology. Going by my definition, it is not spiritual technology without the objective of spiritual growth. Some of the tools listed below, when used without a spiritual objective, would merely be a mental technique for self-betterment, worthwhile in its own right, but not spiritual technology.

“Low-Tech” Spiritual Tools

Examples of old “spiritual technology.” These are tried and true techniques that have worked throughout the ages for many people.

- Affirmations
 - Oral: chants, mantras, songs, sounds
 - Visual: pictures, written word, mandalas, icons
- Rituals and celebrations—“*dramatizing the loyalties of religion*” [99:6.2] (P. 1092) Spinoffs—the arts:
 - music, dance, drama
- Penitent service
- Praying for things rather than values
- Mystical meditation

“High-Tech” Spiritual Tools

These are techniques that are evolving from low-tech tools by benefit of new truths:

- Positive affirmations based on spiritual truths
- The arts reflecting the loyalties of religion
- Loving and selfless service
- Uplifting prayer
- Worshipful meditation

Now, let’s see if we can find some information in *The Urantia Book* that can be used to create tools for spiritual growth.

THE REALITY RESPONSE

One tool that is very handy to have in seeking spiritual truth is the ability for discernment. *The Urantia Book* tells us about a cosmic endowment that we all have, but many do not use, something that can and should be developed to a greater degree; this is called “the reality response.”

“*There exists in all personality associations of the cosmic mind a quality which might be denominated the “reality response.” It is this universal cosmic endowment of will creatures which saves them from becoming helpless victims of the implied a priori assumptions of science, philosophy, and religion*” [16:6.4] (P. 191)

Let’s be clear in what “a priori” means. “a pri·o·ri 1. Proceeding from a known or assumed cause to a necessarily related effect; deductive. 2a. Derived by or designating the process of reasoning without reference to particular facts

or experience. b. Knowable without appeal to particular experience. 3. Made before or without examination; not supported by factual study." [The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000.]

"These scientific, moral, and spiritual insights, these cosmic responses, are innate in the cosmic mind, which endows all will creatures. The experience of living never fails to develop these three cosmic intuitions; they are constitutive in the self-consciousness of reflective thinking. But it is sad to record that so few persons on Urantia take delight in cultivating these qualities of courageous and independent cosmic thinking.

"... when they become unified, they produce a strong character consisting in the correlation of a factual science, a moral philosophy, and a genuine religious experience. And it is these three cosmic intuitions that give objective validity, reality, to man's experience in and with things, meanings, and values.

"It is the purpose of education to develop and sharpen these innate endowments of the human mind; of civilization to express them; of life experience to realize them; of religion to ennoble them; and of personality to unify them." [16:6.9-11] (P. 192)

The cosmic responses which endow all will creatures are: Causation, Duty, Worship.

"The cosmic mind unfailingly responds (recognizes response) on three levels of universe reality. These responses are self-evident to clear-reasoning and deep-thinking minds. These levels of reality are:

1. Causation—the reality domain of the physical senses, the scientific realms of logical uniformity, the differentiation of the factual and the nonfactual, reflective conclusions based on cosmic response. This is the mathematical form of the cosmic discrimination.

2. Duty—the reality domain of morals in the philosophic realm, the arena of reason, the recognition of relative right and wrong. This is the judicial form of the cosmic discrimination.

3. Worship—the spiritual domain of the reality of religious experience, the personal realization of divine fellowship, the recognition of spirit values, the assurance of eternal survival, the ascent from the status of servants of God to the joy and liberty of the sons of God. This is the highest insight of the cosmic mind, the reverential and worshipful form of the cosmic discrimination." [16:6.5-9] (P. 192)

This cosmic endowment, if developed and sharpened, can be used to intuitively discern the cosmic reality of any given assumption or concept. I believe that it can even be used to determine the cosmic desirability of a relationship, a business proposition, or practically any activity. Of course, it would all be in relation to "cosmic" reality, to the eternal perspective, rather than to the short term, that is, the need for immediate gratification.

For the purpose of demonstration, we will apply the concept of the reality response by evaluating a given assumption. As a visual aid, here is a graphic representation. We will grade the assumption for Causation, Duty, and Worship on a 1 to 100 scale, 100 being the highest possible score per category, 300 overall. These scores are totally arbitrary and personal. It will differ for each person.

At the workshop we first graded the assumptions of Christianity as a whole by taking random responses from the audience, then we did the same for The Urantia Book. This is the result:

| Christianity | | | |
|------------------|------|---------|-------|
| Causation | Duty | Worship | Total |
| 10 | 35 | 65 | 110 |
| The Urantia Book | | | |
| 85 | 90 | 95 | 270 |

The best possible score being 300, my estimation is that most people with a well-developed reality response will not wholeheartedly embrace a belief without having a total score of around 250 or over.

Also, I believe the reality response is both intuitive and deductive. Deductive reasoning is necessary to pin down the facts in the area of Causation and to understand new meanings of Duty, while intuition is vital to arriving at the insights that lead to those meanings and in appreciating the values of the realm of Worship. However, like intuition, I think the reality response is usually quick acting, that when it is well-tuned, it will know immediately if a given assumption is in harmony with cosmic reality. But a chart like the above may be helpful in mapping out our relationship with the universe as we contemplate the decisions we face in our lives.

PRAYER

Prayer is also a potent technique of spiritual growth. The Urantia Book gives us much information on perfecting this spiritual technology.

What Does Prayer Do? "But real praying does attain reality. Even when the air currents are ascending, no bird can soar except by outstretched wings. Prayer elevates man because it is a technique of progressing by the utilization of the ascending spiritual currents of the universe."

"Genuine prayer adds to spiritual growth, modifies attitudes, and yields that satisfaction which comes from communion with divinity. It is a spontaneous outburst of God-consciousness." [91:8.9,10] (P. 1002)

Is Prayer Answered? "God answers man's prayer by giving him an increased revelation of truth, an enhanced appre-

ciation of beauty, and an augmented concept of goodness. Prayer is a subjective gesture, but it contacts with mighty objective realities on the spiritual levels of human experience; it is a meaningful reach by the human for superhuman values. It is the most potent spiritual-growth stimulus." [91:8.11] (P. 1002)

How Do We Pray? "Words are irrelevant to prayer; they are merely the intellectual channel in which the river of spiritual supplication may chance to flow. The word value of a prayer is purely autosuggestive in private devotions and sociosuggestive in group devotions. God answers the soul's attitude, not the words. Prayer is not a technique of escape from conflict but rather a stimulus to growth in the very face of conflict. Pray only for values, not things; for growth, not for gratification." [91:8.12] (P. 1002)

Conditions of Effective Prayer. "But real praying does attain reality. Even when the air currents are ascending, no bird can soar except by outstretched wings. Prayer elevates man because it is a technique of progressing by the utilization of the ascending spiritual currents of the universe." [91:8.9] (P. 1002)

"Remember, even if prayer does not change God, it very often effects great and lasting changes in the one who prays in faith and confident expectation. Prayer has been the ancestor of much peace of mind, cheerfulness, calmness, courage, self-mastery, and fair-mindedness in the men and women of the evolving races." [91:4.5] (P. 998)

"If you would engage in effective praying, you should bear in mind the laws of prevailing petitions:

1. You must qualify as a potent prayer by sincerely and courageously facing the problems of universe reality. You must possess cosmic stamina.

2. You must have honestly exhausted the human capacity for human adjustment. You must have been industrious.

3. You must surrender every wish of mind and every craving of soul to the transforming embrace of spiritual growth. You must have experienced an enhancement of meanings and an elevation of values.

4. You must make a wholehearted choice of the divine will. You must obliterate the dead center of indecision.

5. You not only recognize the Father's will and choose to do it, but you have effected an unqualified consecration, and a dynamic dedication, to the actual doing of the Father's will.

6. Your prayer will be directed exclusively for divine wisdom to solve the specific human problems encountered in the Paradise ascension the attainment of divine perfection.

7. And you must have faith living faith." [91:9.1-8] (P. 1002)

I think it is important to differentiate prayer that is asking intercession from God, with the prayer of sending mental energy to other people. Praying for plants, for the

health of yourself and others, for fame and fortune, etc. may merely be the sending out of focused mindal energy, energy that our science has yet to quantify. True prayer is a dialogue with God. The Conditions of Effective Prayer delineates the conditions of using this power effectively with distinct boundaries that define the limitations.

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

Another "treasure" is the information on returning good for evil. This concept has often been misunderstood, ignored, and reduced to a meaningless slogan but now *The Urantia Book* clarifies it and shines bright light on it to restore meaning to its timeless value.

"When Jesus instructed his apostles that they should, when one unjustly took away the coat, offer the other garment, he referred not so much to a literal second coat as to the idea of doing something positive to save the wrongdoer in the place of the olden advice to retaliate "an eye for an eye" and so on. Jesus abhorred the idea either of retaliation or of becoming just a passive sufferer or victim of injustice. On this occasion he taught them the three ways of contending with, and resisting, evil:

1. To return evil for evil—the positive but unrighteous method.

2. To suffer evil without complaint and without resistance—the purely negative method.

3. To return good for evil, to assert the will so as to become master of the situation, to overcome evil with good—the positive and righteous method." [159:5.11] (P. 1770)

Interestingly, an audience member in the workshop commented that Number 2 on the list was important: to suffer evil without complaint and without resistance.

I felt it was good that someone bring this up because in our society, Number 2 is often thought of as of optimum value and is frequently acted upon, while there are lesser amounts of people acting on Number 3. In observing the world around me, it appears that to return good for evil sets the bar up higher than what most people in this day and age are capable of. Which is a good thing, for it gives us something to reach for.

PERSONALITY AND ANTECEDENT CAUSATION

(OR HOW I GOT OUT OF MY KARMA TO FREE MY DOGMA . . .)

Personality and antecedent causation is also related to this because as the following three quotes show, it is only in the inner life that we are creative and can be free from the shackles of material influence. Returning good for evil starts from within.

"The bestowal of creature personality confers relative liberation from slavish response to antecedent causation, and the

personalities of all such moral beings, evolutionary or otherwise, are centered in the personality of the Universal Father." [5:6.9] (P. 71)

"You cannot completely control the external world—environment. It is the creativity of the inner world that is most subject to your direction because there your personality is so largely liberated from the fetters of the laws of antecedent causation. There is associated with personality a limited sovereignty of will." [111:4.8] (P. 1220)

"Since this inner life of man is truly creative, there rests upon each person the responsibility of choosing as to whether this creativity shall be spontaneous and wholly haphazard or controlled, directed, and constructive." [111:4.9] (P. 1220)

This is quite an extraordinary bit of information. This is the key to eternal life, to creativity, to returning good for evil, and to personal transformation and spiritual liberation. With this knowledge, anything is possible, for we are free from the past and the shackles of our past deeds. From within, we can change who we are to become who we want to be and it is only up to our free will to decide and make it so.

However, it is often not easy to go against our ingrained biologic tendencies in the effort to follow our spiritual leadings. This is why we have created systems of spiritual technology to enable us to better control our innate animal natures and to allow us to move toward self-mastery using the power of the mind and the lure of the spirit.

WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION

The technique of contacting God, worshipful meditation, is another nugget of truth that should be used more. Some people have difficulties in effectively negotiating this process. The problem may stem from false preconceptions and the tendency to confuse mystic meditation with spiritual meditation. One of the more common reasons some people cannot meditate for longer than a few minutes is "mind chatter" and the inability to simply sit still doing nothing. Mantras and chanting are two "low-tech" methods that were developed to counter these problems. Newer methods and updates of old practices based on newer sources of information such as *The Urantia Book* are constantly being developed.

What Is Worshipful Meditation? Contact with the divine presence: "The great challenge to modern man is to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor that dwells within the human mind. Man's greatest adventure in the flesh consists in the well-balanced and sane effort to advance the borders of self-consciousness out through the dim realms of embryonic soul-consciousness in a wholehearted effort to reach the borderland of spirit-consciousness—contact with the divine

presence." [196:3.31] (P. 2097)

An attempt to communicate with God: ". . . Worship is, therefore, the act of the material mind's assenting to the attempt of its spiritualizing self, under the guidance of the associated spirit, to communicate with God as a faith son of the Universal Father." [5:3.8] (P. 66)

Highest privilege and the first duty: "Worship is the highest privilege and the first duty of all created intelligences. Worship is the conscious and joyous act of recognizing and acknowledging the truth and fact of the intimate and personal relationships of the Creators with their creatures." [27:7.1] (P. 303)

Spirit-consciousness / Superconsciousness: "If one is disposed to recognize a theoretical subconscious mind as a practical working hypothesis in the otherwise unified intellectual life, then, to be consistent, one should postulate a similar and corresponding realm of ascending intellectual activity as the superconscious level, the zone of immediate contact with the indwelling spirit entity, the Thought Adjuster." [100:5.6] (P. 1099)

The word "superconsciousness" tells me that true worshipful meditation is not a trance state or any state of consciousness where we are only dimly aware of our body, mind, and surroundings. It is not a state of lesser consciousness, but a state of heightened perception. We indeed become "super" conscious.

What Is the Benefit of Worshipful Meditation? Gathers strength, wisdom, and energy: "In this habit of Jesus' going off so frequently by himself to commune with the Father in heaven is to be found the technique, not only of gathering strength and wisdom for the ordinary conflicts of living, but also of appropriating the energy for the solution of the higher problems of a moral and spiritual nature." [160:1.10] (P. 1774)

Becomes the highest delight and most exquisite pleasure: "The quality of worship is determined by the depth of creature perception; and as the knowledge of the infinite character of the Gods progresses, the act of worship becomes increasingly all-encompassing until it eventually attains the glory of the highest experiential delight and the most exquisite pleasure known to created beings." [27:7.1] (P. 303)

A WORD OF CAUTION!

There is a difference between mystical meditation and spiritual meditation.

"In the Master's life on Urantia, this and all other worlds of the local creation discover a new and higher type of religion, religion based on personal spiritual relations with the Universal Father and wholly validated by the supreme authority of genuine personal experience. This living faith of Jesus was more than an intellectual reflection, and it was not a mystic meditation." [196:0.4] (P. 2087)

"The more healthful attitude of spiritual meditation is to be found in reflective worship and in the prayer of thanksgiving. The direct communion with one's Thought Adjuster, such as occurred in the later years of Jesus' life in the flesh, should not be confused with these so-called mystical experiences." [100:5.10] (P. 1100)

Dangers of Extreme Mysticism. "Mysticism, as the technique of the cultivation of the consciousness of the presence of God, is altogether praiseworthy, but when such practices lead to social isolation and culminate in religious fanaticism, they are all but reprehensible. Altogether too frequently that which the overwrought mystic evaluates as divine inspiration is the uprisings of his own deep mind. The contact of the mortal mind with its indwelling Adjuster, while often favored by devoted meditation, is more frequently facilitated by wholehearted and loving service in unselfish ministry to one's fellow creatures." [91:7.1] (P. 1000)

ALTOGETHER TOO FREQUENTLY THAT WHICH THE OVERWROUGHT MYSTIC EVALUATES AS DIVINE INSPIRATION IS THE UPRISINGS OF HIS OWN DEEP MIND. [91:7.1] (P. 1000)

"All of this gravitates consciousness toward the subconscious rather than in the direction of the zone of spiritual contact, the superconscious. Many mystics have carried their mental dissociation to the level of abnormal mental manifestations." [100:5.9] (P. 1100)

Reality Avoidance "There is great danger associated with the habitual practice of religious daydreaming; mysticism may become a technique of reality avoidance, albeit it has sometimes been a means of genuine spiritual communion. Short seasons of retreat from the busy scenes of life may not be seriously dangerous, but prolonged isolation of personality is most undesirable. Under no circumstances should the trancelike state of visionary consciousness be cultivated as a religious experience.

The characteristics of the mystical state are diffusion of consciousness with vivid islands of focal attention operating on a comparatively passive intellect." [100:5.8,9] (P. 1099)

Signs of Extreme Mystical Meditation

- Social isolation
- Religious fanaticism
- Gravitating toward subconsciousness rather than superconscious
- Mental dissociation
- Abnormal mental manifestations
- Reality avoidance
- Prolonged isolation of personality

- Cultivation of trancelike state
- Diffusion of consciousness on a passive intellect

HOW IS WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION DONE?

Consent, initiate and conduct: ". . . Worship is, therefore, the act of the material mind's assenting to the attempt of its spiritualizing self, under the guidance of the associated spirit, to communicate with God as a faith son of the Universal Father. The mortal mind consents to worship; the immortal soul craves and initiates worship; the divine Adjuster presence conducts such worship in behalf of the mortal mind and the evolving immortal soul." [5:3.8] (P. 66)

Personal communion: ". . . I refer to that which he so consistently practices, and which he has so faithfully taught you, the isolation of worshipful meditation. In this habit of Jesus' going off so frequently by himself to commune with the Father in heaven is to be found the technique, not only of gathering

strength and wisdom for the ordinary conflicts of living, but also of appropriating the energy for the solution of the higher problems of a moral and spiritual nature." [160:1.10] (P. 1774)

Meditation and relaxation: ". . . From the human standpoint it is a question of combined meditation and relaxation. Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit; relaxation determines the capacity for spiritual receptivity. And this interchange of strength for weakness, courage for fear, the will of God for the mind of self, constitutes worship." [160.3.1] (P. 1777)

It is a joy and a pleasure: ". . . Worship is the conscious and joyous act of recognizing and acknowledging the truth and fact of the intimate and personal relationships of the Creators with their creatures. The quality of worship is determined by the depth of creature perception; and as the knowledge of the infinite character of the Gods progresses, the act of worship becomes increasingly all-encompassing until it eventually attains the glory of the highest experiential delight and the most exquisite pleasure known to created beings." [27:7.1] (P. 303)

There are many techniques, and more being formulated daily. Find one that works for you, or experiment and create one for yourself. Just keep in mind the information in the book and have fun, because, remember, it should be enjoyable. The thing to remember is that it is not a trance state or a state of dulled perception, but rather a heightened

state of awareness, a superconsciousness that impinges on contact with our divine spirit.

ETERNAL LIFE: THE SWEETEST FRUIT OF ALL

The greatest nugget of information in *The Urantia Book* may arguably be the technique on achieving eternal life. This is the only place I know where a formula is given for attaining immortality!

Identification with spirit: "*Spirit identification constitutes the secret of personal survival and determines the destiny of spiritual ascension.*" [40:5.4] (P. 445)

"*The personality of the mortal creature may eternalize by self-identification with the indwelling spirit through the technique of choosing to do the will of the Father.*" [118:1.2] (P. 1295)

Identification with eternal values: "*In so far as man's evolving morontia soul becomes permeated by truth, beauty, and goodness as the value-realization of God-consciousness, such a resultant being becomes indestructible. If there is no survival of eternal values in the evolving soul of man, then mortal existence is without meaning, and life itself is a tragic illusion. But it is forever true: What you begin in time you will assuredly finish in eternity—if it is worth finishing.*" [111:3.7] (P. 1219)

"... *Mortal memory of human experience on the material worlds of origin survives death in the flesh because the indwelling Adjuster has acquired a spirit counterpart, or transcript, of those events of human life which were of spiritual significance.*" [40:9.4] (PP. 450–51)

Mind: The arena of choice: "*Material mind is the arena in which human personalities live, are self-conscious, make decisions, choose God or forsake him, eternalize or destroy themselves.*" [111:1.3] (P. 1216)

More than physical: "*A human mind, built up solely out of the consciousness of physical sensations, could never attain spiritual levels; this kind of material mind would be utterly lacking in a sense of moral values and would be without a guiding sense of spiritual dominance which is so essential to achieving harmonious personality unity in time, and which is inseparable from personality survival in eternity.*" [133:7.10] (P. 1480)

Actively, positively and co-operatively: "*But man does not passively, slavishly, surrender his will to the Adjuster. Rather does he actively, positively, and co-operatively choose to follow the Adjuster's leading when and as such leading consciously differs from the desires and impulses of the natural mortal mind.*" [111.1.8] (P. 1217)

Think of your life up to this point. What elements of your life do you think will be preserved in eternity? What will survive? What will not?

Take a look at your daily activities. How many of your daily efforts and actions lead toward the ascension career?

How much of the things you do is action resulting from identification with spirit?

The Thought Adjuster only makes transcripts of those events in your life that are of spiritual significance. How much of your life is your Adjuster making a transcript of?

The more you do in identification of spirit here and now, the more of you will survive into eternity. The inconsequential and the negative will fade away.

- Only those things of eternal value will last.
- Identification with physical and material values ends in death.
- Identification with spirit and spiritual values results in eternal life.
- Whenever we choose spiritual values and principles over personal material gain, we are choosing to identify with spirit.

If this information is applied, will we live forever? We cannot know. There can be no evidence until we have eternalized. But there can be some evidence in our lives. I am sure you have done something based on identification with material and transient values. I am also sure that you have done things in identification with spirit and spiritual values. Reflect on the difference in how you felt, and how others reacted. It is purely personal and subjective, but the results are stored in your soul.

By applying the truths in *The Urantia Book*, we can actually enhance spiritual perception. We can inspire others to seek spiritual growth. Our "fruits of the spirit" contain the seeds that will stimulate souls into seeking spiritual upliftment. By manifesting the "fruits of the spirit" in our relationships, we are planting the seed of soul growth. From person to person, this virus of love will slowly spread until it takes over the world. This is the way Light and Life will come to our planet. This is the ultimate proof and validation of the truths in *The Urantia Book*.

The Urantia Book contains many more such "treasures" as I have mentioned. The only way to ascertain their usefulness is to put them into practice. Discover them and apply them to your daily life. Use them to create systems and methods of facilitating spiritual growth. We are in very exciting times! Indeed, the adventure beckons!

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Meditation in *The Urantia Book* - Jesus Style

By Peter Holley, Syria, VA

Editor's Note: All bold words throughout indicate emphasis added by the author.

WORDS CHANGE THEIR MEANING

The Urantia Book tells us that Jesus meditated—a lot! What it doesn't say is that the word "meditation" has evolved away from its original meaning during the years following the revelation's final inditing in the mid 1930s. Such evolution of words was, of course, anticipated by the revelators, who tell us that the expression of religion "must be restated every time the dictionary of human language is revised." [99: 1.6] (P. 1087) Likewise, the meaning of each affected teaching needs to be renewed when necessary.

The problem with changed words is that they can give us an altered picture if we aren't careful. The fact that Jesus used and taught meditation as a means to communicate

dictionaries, however, now place it as the *preferred* definition. The following definition of the intransitive use of the verb is from an online dictionary:² meditate: 1. A. Buddhism & Hinduism. To train, calm, or empty the mind, often by achieving an altered state, as by focusing on a single object. B. To engage in devotional contemplation, especially prayer. 2. To think or reflect, especially in a calm and deliberate manner.

This is not to say, however, that the Buddhism and Hinduism style of meditation was unknown in the middle thirties in the West, or that the word "meditation" was never used to denote it. It was, but it appears to have

...THE WORD "MEDITATION" HAS EVOLVED AWAY FROM ITS ORIGINAL MEANING DURING THE YEARS FOLLOWING THE REVELATION'S FINAL INDITING IN THE MID 1930'S.

with one's Thought Adjuster makes it vitally important for us to understand what is meant, if, as *The Urantia Book* states on the last page, the "great challenge to modern man is to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor that dwells within the human mind." [196:3.32] (P. 2097)

A dictionary contemporary with the reception of the finalized Urantia Papers (as later originally published in *The Urantia Book*) provides the following definition of the word "meditation:" close or continued thought, the turning or revolving of a subject in the mind, serious contemplation; mental reflection; often specifically, thought devoted to religious subjects.¹

The type of "meditation" often associated with Eastern religions, which requires an altered state of consciousness, had not at that time migrated into the dictionary. It became a secondary definition of "meditation" sometime after Yogi Paramhansa Yogananda came to the West and brought about what has been called a religious revolution with the publication of his book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, in 1946. Yet a look at a 1955 desk dictionary shows that the more intellectually passive type of meditation had not even appeared by *The Urantia Book's* publication date. Neither is it included in my 1982 "College" dictionary. Some modern

needed qualification. Apparently the Buddhism and Hinduism type is what the revelators meant when they referred to "mystic meditation" (see also "mystic trances," "mystic communications," "mystic experiences," "mystic phenomena," "mystic communion," "mystic status," and "mystical state"). The root of "mystic" is a Greek term meaning "belonging to secret rites" or "priest of mysteries," and in the middle of the 1930s the word itself referred to things that were secret or obscure. The fact is that Buddhist and Hindu meditators at that time still kept their traditional techniques as highly guarded secrets, passing them on only to followers whom they considered to be qualified to receive them. Their meditative techniques seemed even more "mystical," because they revolved around altered consciousness and brought about—to the Western way of thinking—extraordinary experiences. Some few Europeans living in the East had, however, submitted to yogis or to Buddhist masters and applied themselves to their esoteric teachings, and then, later, brought the practices back home with them.

One instance of such early, non-dictionary-defined use is found in a then-contemporary publication that is believed to have furnished the source for much of the Rodan material

in *The Urantia Book*³. This example, which is found in the book *Issues of Life*, by Henry Nelson Wieman⁴, demonstrates a need for the word “meditation” to be modified in order to indicate something akin to the Buddhism and Hinduism style technique. Wieman speaks of “a kind of worshipful, meditative waiting, in which one quietly hearkens until the call of the world and the deepest desire of his own heart merge into a single demand. Waiting before the Highest,” he writes, “fosters inarticulate aspiration.”⁵ Rather than simply calling it “meditation,” as many might today, Wieman had to coin the term “inarticulate aspiration” and link it to “a kind of worshipful, meditative waiting.”

RODAN GIVES US WHAT IS PERHAPS THE BEST VIEW IN *THE URANTIA BOOK* OF THE TYPE OF MEDITATION THAT JESUS BOTH TAUGHT AND PRACTICED HIMSELF.

But what is most illustrative by this example is the fact that the revelators took Wieman’s passive “kind of worshipful, meditative waiting” and turned it into the dynamically active, reflective type of meditation in the above definitions, that is, the style of meditation that Jesus used and taught. The midwayer author of Part IV compared such deep-thinking meditators with “high-climbing souls” who reach a “mountaintop of intellectual thought” where they can “attain consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication.” [160:3.5] (P. 1778) Elsewhere *The Urantia Book* laments, however, that it is “sad to record that so few persons on Urantia take delight in cultivating these qualities of courageous and independent cosmic thinking.” [16:6.9] (P. 192)

RODAN

Rodan gives us what is perhaps the best view in *The Urantia Book* of the type of meditation that Jesus both taught and practiced himself. Rodan had “become a disciple of Jesus through the teaching of one of Abner’s associates who had conducted a mission at Alexandria.” [160:0.1] (P. 1772) And Abner, of all of Jesus’ disciples, apparently had the best grasp on Jesus’ teachings. At least we are told that “during the later years of Abner and for some time thereafter, the believers at Philadelphia held more strictly to the religion of Jesus, as he lived and taught, than any other group on earth.” [166:5.6] (P. 1832) In any event, the Rodan material certainly was not placed in *The Urantia Book* to mislead us.

Rodan spoke of what Jesus “so consistently practices, and which he has so faithfully taught . . . the isolation of worshipful

meditation . . . this habit of Jesus’ going off so frequently by himself to commune with the Father in heaven.” Jesus was, Rodan said, even as he spoke “out in the hills taking in power”. [160:1.10] (P. 1774)

Rodan went on to say that: “The secret of all this problem is wrapped up in spiritual communion, in worship. From the human standpoint it is a question of combined meditation and relaxation. Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit; relaxation determines the capacity for spiritual receptivity. And this interchange of strength for weakness, courage for fear, the will of God for the mind of self, constitutes worship.” [160:3.1] (P. 1777)

He observed that, “On every mountaintop of intellectual thought are to be found relaxation for the mind, strength for the soul, and communion for the spirit.” And he indicated how the lower, egoistic thinking is to be overcome by higher thoughts: “From such vantage points of high living, man is able to transcend the material irritations of the lower levels of thinking—worry, jealousy, envy, revenge, and the pride of immature personality. These high-climbing souls deliver themselves from a multitude of the crosscurrent conflicts of the trifles of living, thus becoming free to attain consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication.” [160:3.5] (P. 1778)

The Greek philosopher-turned-disciple added: “When these experiences are frequently repeated, they crystallize into habits, strength-giving and worshipful habits, and such habits eventually formulate themselves into a spiritual character, and such a character is finally recognized by one’s fellows as a mature personality. These practices are difficult and time-consuming at first, but when they become habitual, they are at once restful and timesaving.” [160:3.2] (P. 1777)

Notice that, for Rodan, the relaxation associated with Jesus’ dynamic, thinking type of meditation is a result of having reached the “mountaintop of intellectual thought” and “spiritual communion” rather than being part of the means to attain it—that is, a more or less stand-alone part of the technique—as it is in Hinduism and Buddhism (and in auto-hypnosis).

Rodan’s most profound statement is, “Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit;” [160:3.1] (P. 1777) In other words, spirit is contacted by the actively thinking mind. And this is entirely consistent with what we are

taught elsewhere in *The Urantia Book* about the nature of the Thought Adjusters vis-a-vis the mortal mind.

THOUGHT ADJUSTER

We are told quite clearly and in a number of ways that the Thought Adjusters dwell and interact within “*the thinking centers of the individual’s mind.*” [34:5.6] (P. 379)

“If one is disposed to recognize a theoretical subconscious mind as a practical working hypothesis in the otherwise unified intellectual life, then, to be consistent, one should postulate a similar and corresponding realm of ascending intellectual activity as the superconscious level, the zone of immediate contact with the indwelling spirit entity, the Thought Adjuster.” [100:5.6] (P. 1099)

“Human consciousness rests gently upon the electrochemical mechanism below and delicately touches the spirit-morontia energy system above. Of neither of these two systems is the human being ever completely conscious in his mortal life; therefore must he work in mind, of which he is conscious.” [111:1.5] (P. 1216)

Notice how closely this idea of “*ascending intellectual activity*” parallels Rodan’s image of meditation being intellectual mountain climbing. Notice also that it is not the lower area of consciousness that is involved, but the upper “*spirit-morontia energy system.*”

“The chief difficulty you experience in contacting with your Adjusters consists in [your] . . . very inherent material nature. **So few mortals are real thinkers**; you do not spiritually develop and discipline your minds to the point of favorable liaison with the divine Adjusters. The ear of the human mind is almost deaf to the spiritual pleas which the Adjuster translates from the manifold messages of the universal broadcasts of love proceeding from the Father of mercies. The Adjuster finds it almost impossible to register these inspiring spirit leadings in an animal mind so completely dominated by the chemical and electrical forces inherent in your physical natures.” [110:7.6] (P. 1213)

reception or expression of religious emotions. These experiences are made available through the naturally ordained mechanism of mortal mind. And therein lies one explanation of the Adjuster’s difficulty in engaging in direct communication with the material mind of its constant indwelling.

The divine spirit makes contact with mortal man, not by feelings or emotions, but in the realm of the **highest and most spiritualized thinking.**” [101:1.2–3] (P. 1104)

[The Thought Adjuster] “is the higher and truly internal spiritual stimulus of thought.” [108:6.4] (P. 1193)

“The Adjuster is not trying to control your thinking, as such, but rather to spiritualize it, to eternalize it. Neither angels nor Adjusters are devoted directly to influencing human thought; that is your exclusive personality prerogative. The Adjusters are dedicated to improving, modifying, adjusting, and co-ordinating your **thinking processes.**” [110:2.3] (P. 1205)

The divine indwellers adjust our thinking until it speaks for them, until the content of our thoughts coincides with higher truth and their translations of the universal broadcasts from the Paradise Father. What we experience in the perfecting of Jesus-style meditation is at the same time their thinking and our own! Rodan likewise spoke of the need for the mental discipline found in the frequent repetition of the practice of worshipful, dynamic-thinking-coupled-with-relaxation, that is, Jesus-style meditation, in order to develop the mind for spiritual communication.

It is plain to see that in Jesus-style meditation the “worry, jealousy, envy, revenge, and the pride of immature personality” [160:3.5] (P. 1778) of which Rodan spoke are to be harnessed and used by us rather than being emptied from the mind at the start as both the yogis and the Buddhists do. It is we who must take our thoughts—as we find them—and aim them Godward. Jesus said: “Be not constantly overanxious about your common needs. Be not apprehensive concerning the problems of your earthly existence, but in all these things by prayer and supplication, with the spirit of sincere thanksgiving, let your needs be spread out before your Father who is in

THOUGHT ADJUSTERS DO NOT SPEAK TO OUR MINDS, BUT MUST USE OUR MINDS TO SPEAK FOR THEM.

Here the assumption is that *thinking* both contacts and “hears” the Thought Adjuster, since nothing is being said about passive “listening.” The Thought Adjusters do not speak to our minds, but must use our minds to speak for them. They do this with our own thinking processes: “The Thought Adjuster has no special mechanism through which to gain self-expression; there is no mystic religious faculty for the

heaven.” [146:2.16] (P. 1640) At the same time Jesus exhorted “his believers to employ prayer as a means of leading up through thanksgiving to true worship.” [146:2.15] (P. 1640) And Rodan, speaking of these same things, wrapped up meditation, relaxation, and spiritual communion into the same ball of wax as constituting “worship” or “worshipful meditation.”

So, from this we see that there is really only a difference in degree between all of this God-directed thought: prayer, cosmic thinking, thanksgiving, meditation, and worship. They are like different members of a family rather than different species. For instance, in some of its aspects meditation differs little from prayer, and in others it is the same as worship. Additionally, it may be productive of great outpourings of thanksgiving.

Prayer, *The Urantia Book* reveals, is the only “technique whereby every man, regardless of all other mortal accomplishments, can so effectively and immediately approach the threshold of that realm wherein he can communicate with his Maker, where the creature contacts with the reality of the Creator, with the indwelling Thought Adjuster.” [91:6.7] (P. 1000)

Also, “Prayer will lead the mortals of earth up to the communion of true worship.” [144:4.4] (P. 1621) But “Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit;” [160:3.1] (P. 1777) and “The moment the element of self-interest intrudes upon worship, that instant devotion translates from worship to prayer.” [5:3.4] (P. 65) The same is no doubt true concerning the higher and lower aspects of Jesus-style meditation. Its lower aspect is commonly a quest for knowledge and understanding of a subject or problem, a factual elucidation. The higher aspect—transcendent, worshipful meditation—is a type of self-forgetful cosmic thinking, and it is here that the knowledge and understanding, or spiritual elucidation, is likely to be found.

“Thinking surrenders to wisdom, and wisdom is lost in enlightened and reflective worship.” [112:2.7] (P. 1228)

“. . . wisdom [is] meditative and experiential thinking” [85:7.3] (P. 948)

“. . . worship is self-forgetting—superthinking.” [143:7.7] (P. 1616)

Or restated: “Ordinary thinking ascends to meditative and experiential thinking, and it, in turn, transcends into enlightened and reflective worship.” And again: “Why do you not aid the Adjuster in the task of showing you the spiritual counterpart of all these strenuous material efforts? Why do you not allow the Adjuster to strengthen you with the spiritual truths of cosmic power while you wrestle with the temporal difficulties of creature existence? Why do you not encourage the heavenly helper to cheer you with the clear vision of the eternal outlook of universal life as you gaze in perplexity at the problems of the passing hour? Why do you refuse to be enlightened and inspired by the universe viewpoint while you toil amidst the handicaps of time and flounder in the maze of uncertainties which beset your mortal life journey? Why not allow the Adjuster to **spiritualize your thinking**, even though your feet must tread the material

paths of earthly endeavor?” [111:3] (P. 1223)

It was in this sense that Jesus told Peter: “Let experience teach you the value of **meditation** and the power of intelligent reflection.” [192:2.2] (P. 2047). Also, Jesus-style spiritual meditation is an essential factor of spiritual growth: “Habits which favor religious growth embrace cultivated sensitivity to divine values, recognition of religious living in others, reflective meditation on cosmic meanings, worshipful problem solving, sharing one’s spiritual life with one’s fellows, avoidance of selfishness, refusal to presume on divine mercy, living as in the presence of God.” [100:1.8] (P. 1095)

JESUS MEDITATING

In almost every instance of examples in *The Urantia Book* wherein Jesus meditated, the context clearly shows that he was engaged in thought (see the following list). In those few in which it is not abundantly apparent, it may be assumed that he was, because nowhere is any contrary notion maintained. In fact, in *The Urantia Book* the meditative doctrine of “thinking nothing” (along with “seeing” and “doing” nothing), which was derived from the teaching by Lao T’su on “nonresistance and the distinction which he made between action and coercion” (and which can still be found in the teachings of Buddhism) is called “perverted” by the revelators. [94:6.7] (P. 1034) Furthermore, cultivation of the “mystical state” (or “trancelike state of visionary consciousness”), which is described as consisting in part of a “comparatively passive intellect”—we are warned—should be in all circumstances shunned as a means of religious experience, because it “gravitates consciousness toward the subconscious rather than in the direction of the zone of spiritual contact” [100:5.8–9] (P. 1100), that is, toward the lower, animal level rather than the upper, morontia-spiritual level of consciousness. Whether or not this warning speaks directly to the meditation practices of Hindus and Buddhists is problematical (but see below). In the final analysis, it is up to the devotees of the more passive intellect styles of meditation to make such discernments for themselves. Personally, as a follower of Jesus, I prefer to align my meditation practices with those of my Master and Elder Brother, Jesus of Nazareth:

1. As early as his eleventh year, Jesus engaged in “**profound meditation and serious contemplation.**” The content of this mental discipline, we are told, was his “**thinking about how he was to carry out his obligations to his family and at the same time be obedient to the call of his mission to the world.**” [124:3.10] (P. 1371)

2. When Jesus was thirteen, he visited the temple in Jerusalem for the first time. When he first saw the throngs gathered together for Passover, “He **meditated deeply on**

how these Jews had assembled here from the uttermost parts of the known world." [1124:6.11] (P. 1375) During this visit his family stayed at Bethany and he spent "much of the time alone in the garden **meditating**." [125:4.1] (P. 1381) And we are told that at least some of this meditation in the garden "was concerned with the **contemplation of weighty problems**." [125:4.4] (P. 1382)

3. In Jesus fourteenth year, "he made frequent trips to the top of the hill to the northwest of Nazareth for prayer and **meditation**." During this time he "would gaze upon Megiddo and **recall the story** [thought] of the Egyptian army winning its first great victory in Asia; and how, later on, another such army defeated the Judean king Josiah. Not far away he could look upon Taanach, where Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera. In the distance he could view the hills of Dothan, where he had been taught Joseph's brethren sold him into Egyptian slavery. He then would shift his gaze over to Ebal and Gerizim and **recount**

GOD SPEAKS TO US WITH WHAT TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, ARE OUR OWN THOUGHTS.

to himself [thought] the traditions of Abraham, Jacob, and Abimelech. And thus he recalled and **turned over in his mind** [thought] the historic and traditional events of his father Joseph's people." [126:1.1] (P. 1387) Notice that the revelators used almost the precise mid-1930s definition of "meditation:" "the turning or revolving of a subject in the mind!"

4. When Jesus was fifteen, we are told that "His **profound periods of meditation**, his frequent journeys to the hilltop for prayer, and the many strange ideas which Jesus advanced from time to time, thoroughly alarmed his mother." [126:3.13] (P. 1391) Again, this is directly related to his thinking, although this is not quite as clear as in some other examples: "Jesus was learning not to speak of all his **thoughts**, not to present all his **ideas** to the world, not even to his own mother. From this year on, Jesus' disclosures about **what was going on in his mind** steadily diminished; that is, he talked less about those things which an average person could not grasp, and which would lead to his being regarded as peculiar or different from ordinary folks." [126:3.14] (P. 1291)

5. At the age of twenty-five, Jesus' "**seasons of deep meditation** were often broken into by Ruth and her playmates." We are informed that the content of this deep meditation was, again, the "contemplation of his future work for the world and the universe." [128:6.10] (P. 1416)

6. Immediately after Jesus' baptism, he went into the hills for forty days because "he desired to be away for a season of **quiet meditation** so that he could think out the

plans and decide upon the procedures for the prosecution of his public labors in behalf of this world and for all other worlds in his local universe." [136:3.3] (P. 1513) During this period of meditation he went without food for two days because "he was so engrossed with his **thinking** that he forgot all about eating." And the "results of this momentous season of meditation demonstrated conclusively that the divine mind has triumphantly and spiritually dominated the human intellect." [146:4.3-4] (P. 1514) It should likewise be the goal of our own Jesus-style meditation to identify ourselves more and more with our "divine mind," the mind of our Thought Adjuster, accepting its spiritualized version of our thoughts as being our own!

7. Sometime later Jesus spent a whole "night of **meditation**" on the shore of the Sea of Galilee "thinking, thinking until the dawn of the next day." [137:5.3] (P. 1532)

8. Whether Jesus' season of meditation was over a month in length, overnight, or compressed into a fleeting

moment, he was engaged in thinking: "And when Jesus had bowed his head a moment in silent **meditation**, he suddenly spoke, 'Return to your home; your son will live.' . . . this was not a miracle of curing physical disease. It was merely a case of **preknowledge** concerning the course of natural law, just such **knowledge** as Jesus frequently resorted to subsequent to his baptism." [146:5.2] (P. 1644-5) Knowledge, of course, is indivisible from the thoughts and concepts that contain and express it.

9. Later we see Jesus sitting in an old boat where he "**meditated** on the next move to be made in the work of extending the kingdom." [151:1.1] (P. 1688) Again, look at the content of his "meditation." It clearly implies thought.

We can be assured that in all of these instances of meditation (at least after he was grown) Jesus was engaged in transcendent thinking in his higher mind and/or with direct or indirect communication with his Thought Adjuster, or as Rodan put it, his "consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication." [160:3.5] (P. 1778) Jesus meditated and came away with knowledge of the Father's will. And so can we all! That is Jesus-style meditation's most obvious purpose.

HEARING GOD

I have pointed out that it must not be assumed that thoughtful meditation is a one-way street. We "hear" our Thought Adjuster's communication within our minds by

the very higher-level thoughts with which we access the area of mind in which the Monitor indwells. God speaks to us with what to all intents and purposes, are our own thoughts: "You are quite incapable of distinguishing the product of your own material intellect from that of the conjoint activities of your soul and the Adjuster." [110:4.2] (P. 1207)

Here is the way that Jesus' Thought Adjuster communicated with him when he was thirteen: "It was about the middle of February that Jesus became humanly assured that he was destined to perform a mission on earth for the enlightenment of man and the revelation of God. Momentous decisions, coupled with far-reaching plans, were formulating in the mind of this youth, who was, to outward appearances, an average Jewish lad of Nazareth. The intelligent life of all Nebadon looked on with fascination and amazement as **all this began to unfold in the thinking** and acting of the now adolescent carpenter's son." [124:5.3] (P. 1373)

We are also told that "worship may be compared to the act of tuning in the soul to catch the universe broadcasts of the

"The worship experience consists in the sublime attempt of the betrothed Adjuster to communicate to the divine Father the inexpressible longings and the unutterable aspirations of the human soul—the conjoint creation of the God-seeking mortal mind and the God-revealing immortal Adjuster. Worship is, therefore, the act of the material mind's assenting to the attempt of its spiritualizing self, under the guidance of the associated spirit, to communicate with God as a faith son of the Universal Father. The mortal mind consents to worship; the immortal soul craves and initiates worship; the **divine Adjuster presence conducts such worship** in behalf of the mortal mind and the evolving immortal soul. True worship, in the last analysis, becomes an experience realized on four cosmic levels: the **intellectual**, the morontial, the spiritual, and the personal—the consciousness of mind, soul, and spirit, and their unification in personality." [5:3.8] (P. 66)

The distinction between prayer, worship, and Jesus-style meditation seems to be quite fine:

"Subsequent to the baptism of Jesus and the forty days

... SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE DURING WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION (AFTER SUFFICIENT PRACTICE AND PERSONAL GROWTH—THE NEED FOR THIS CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH) OUR OWN THOUGHT-PRODUCING EFFORT MORE OR LESS CEASES AND THAT OF THE ADJUSTER MIND TAKES OVER ...

infinite spirit of the Universal Father." [144:4.8] (P. 1621) Worship, as we have seen from Rodan, is part of the same ball of wax as meditation. Worship is defined in one place in *The Urantia Book* as "superthinking," that is, egoless or "self forgetful" thought. Again, reflecting what happens on Rodan's "mountaintop of intellectual thought," it is "effortless attention, true and ideal soul rest, a form of restful spiritual exertion." [143:7.7] (P. 1616)

What happens is that somewhere along the line during worshipful meditation (after sufficient practice and personal growth—the need for this cannot be stressed enough) our own thought-producing effort more or less ceases and that of the Adjuster mind takes over and directs our thinking, providing a spiritualized counterpart. But, as we have seen above, what we perceive in our mind cannot be in any way distinguished from our own thinking. It is in fact our own thinking! There is no real difference in this sense between what happens in worshipful meditation and what takes place during worship:

in the Peraan hills, it is hardly proper to speak of these seasons of communion with his Father as prayer, nor is it consistent to speak of Jesus as worshipping, but it is altogether correct to allude to these seasons as personal **communion with his Father.**" [144:1.5] (P. 1618)

And that was precisely how Rodan defined the meditation which Jesus "so consistently practices, and which he has so faithfully taught . . . the isolation of **worshipful meditation** . . . this habit of Jesus' going off so frequently by himself to **commune with the Father in heaven.**" [160:1.10] (P. 1774)

"SILENT RECEPTIVITY"

It is true indeed that "Jesus taught his followers that, when they had made their prayers to the Father, they should remain for a time in **silent receptivity** to afford the indwelling spirit the better opportunity to speak to the listening soul." [146:2.17] (P. 1641) But in determining its relationship to meditation we should first of all note that this concerns a communication to the

Speaking of the "high-climbing souls" who are able by Jesus-style meditation to "attain consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication," Rodan adds:

"But the life purpose must be jealously guarded from the temptation to seek for **easy and transient attainment**; likewise must it be so fostered as to become immune to the **disastrous threats of fanaticism**." [160:3.5] (P. 1778)

Mainly the dangers to be encountered during all attempts to achieve contact with the Thought Adjuster fall into one or both of two distinct categories: "subconscious delusions or superconscious illusions." [100:5.11] (P. 1100) This is because the unspiritualized or partially-spiritualized creative imagination is such a powerful force in the mind of individuals. Compare the following:

"Since this inner life of man is truly creative, there rests upon each person the responsibility of choosing as to whether this creativity shall be **spontaneous and wholly haphazard or controlled, directed, and constructive**. How can a creative imagination produce worthy children when the stage whereon it functions is already preoccupied by prejudice, hate, fears, resentments, revenge, and bigotries?" [111:4.9] (P. 1220)

"Supreme and self-acting Adjusters are often able to contribute factors of spiritual import to the human mind when it flows freely in the **liberated but controlled channels of creative imagination**." [109:5.1] (P. 1199)

"Most of the spectacular phenomena associated with so-called religious conversions are entirely psychologic in nature, but now and then there do occur experiences which are also spiritual in origin. When the mental mobilization is absolutely total on any level of the psychic upreach toward spirit attainment, when there exists perfection of the human motivation of loyalties to the divine idea, then there very often occurs a sudden down-grasp of the indwelling spirit to synchronize with the concentrated and consecrated purpose of the superconscious mind of the believing mortal . . . To the extent that such psychic mobilization is partial, and in so far as such human-loyalty motivation is incomplete, to that extent will the experience of conversion be a **blended intellectual, emotional, and spiritual reality**." [100:5.4-5] (P. 1099)

"While their mortal hosts are asleep, the Adjusters try to register their creations in the higher levels of the material mind, and some of your **grotesque dreams** indicate their failure to make efficient contact. The absurdities of dream life not only testify to pressure of unexpressed emotions but also bear witness to the **horrible distortion** of the representations of the spiritual concepts presented by the Adjusters. Your own **passions, urges, and other innate tendencies translate themselves into the picture and substitute their unexpressed desires for the**

divine messages which the indwellers are endeavoring to put into the psychic records during unconscious sleep." [110:5.4] (P. 1208)

"The **great danger** in all these psychic speculations is that visions and other so-called mystic experiences, along with extraordinary dreams, may be regarded as divine communications to the human mind." [100:5.6] (P. 1099)

As an illustration of the power of the creative imagination, children at their "dawn of creative imagination . . . evince a tendency to converse with imaginary companions" [91:3.1] (P. 996); in adults this same creative imagination has been responsible for the projection of gods that "are figments of the imagination, illusions of mortal mind, distortions of false logic, and the self-deceptive idols of those who create them." [160:5.9] (P. 1781) This applies not only to cultural gods, but to our private perceptions of the divine as well.

"The philosophic elimination of religious fear and the steady progress of science add greatly to the mortality of false gods; and even though these casualties of man-made deities may momentarily befog the spiritual vision, they eventually destroy that ignorance and superstition which so long obscured the living God of eternal love." [102:6.1] (P. 1124)

Unfortunately, The Urantia Book reader's private perception of the divine is seen in terms not only of the Paradise Father, but as one's Thought Adjuster. That is, the mind can easily create, as it were, a false thought Adjuster:

"But a human being would do better to err in rejecting an Adjuster's expression through believing it to be a purely human experience than to **blunder into exalting a reaction of the mortal mind to the sphere of divine dignity**. . . In varying degrees and increasingly as you ascend the psychic circles, sometimes directly, but more often indirectly, you do communicate with your Adjusters. But it is dangerous to entertain the idea that every new concept originating in the human mind is the dictation of the Adjuster. More often, in beings of your order, that which you accept as the Adjuster's voice is in reality the emanation of your own intellect. **This is dangerous ground**, and every human being must settle these problems for himself in accordance with his natural human wisdom and superhuman insight." [110:5.5-6] (P. 1208)

"Mortal man has a spirit nucleus. The mind is a personal-energy system existing around a divine spirit nucleus and functioning in a material environment. Such a living relationship of personal mind and spirit constitutes the universe potential of eternal personality. Real trouble, lasting disappointment, serious defeat, or inescapable death can come only after **self-concepts presume fully to displace the governing power of the central spirit nucleus**, thereby disrupting the cosmic scheme of personality identity." [12:9.6] (P. 142)

Whatever material has been stored in the unconscious memory—including the teachings of *The Urantia Book*—can become the costume wherein the creative imagination dresses up its hallucinatory subconscious delusions and superconscious illusions:

“Altogether too much of the uprush of the memories of the unconscious levels of the human mind has been mistaken for divine revelations and spirit leadings.” [100:5.7] (P. 1099)

“Certain abrupt presentations of thoughts, conclusions, and other pictures of mind are sometimes the direct or indirect work of the Adjuster; but far more often they are the sudden emergence into consciousness of ideas which have been grouping themselves together in the submerged mental levels, natural and everyday occurrences of normal and ordinary psychic function inherent in the circuits of the evolving animal mind.” [110:4.3] (P. 1207)

“The human mind may perform in response to so-called inspiration when it is sensitive either to the uprisings of the subconscious or to the stimulus of the superconscious. In either case it appears to the individual that such augmentations of the content of consciousness are more or less foreign.” [91:7.4] (P. 1000)

If these communications with the false gods created by our minds contain the highest truths which we have ever encountered (for instance the teachings in the *Urantia Papers*) they may prove to be altogether too believable. When subconscious delusions or superconscious illusions displace truth and are raised to the sphere of divine dignity and are believed to be genuine spiritual communications, fanaticism—or worse—is the likely outcome. It appears that it was for these reasons that the warnings in *The Urantia Book* were given to us.

In apparent response to these very same illusionary/delusionary dangers, internationally recognized expert on herbal healing, reciprocal mind-body influence, and “Integrative Medicine,” physician-author Andrew T. Weil, writes: “Zen masters warn their meditating students to ignore makyo-sensory distortions that often take the form of visions seen by mystics in rapturous states or hallucinations similar to those of schizophrenics”.⁶ The Hindu *Upanishads* “prescribe external and internal purity, continence, non-stealing, truthfulness, not injuring any being either by words or deeds, [and] similar moral-ethical basic values to achieve the state of samadhi (e.g., “a state of altered consciousness, the state to which a person reaches or is expected to reach through spiritual disciplines of meditation and Yoga”).”⁷

Questioned privately, senior-certified Iyengar yoga instructor Sam Dworkis, told me⁸: “After due deliberation, my general response to your second email has to be simply

based upon one sentence, to wit: *Under no circumstances should the trancelike state of visionary consciousness be cultivated as a religious experience.* [100:5.9] (P. 1099)

When I was younger and when I was living a much more protected lifestyle, I did experiment with the more esoteric concepts of yoga. However now that I am older and living more conventionally, I do not enter into esoteric practices either in personal practice or teaching. Because my “work” is now predicated upon “maximizing potential and minimizing liability,” and as a Westerner living in a Western body, I must reject using yoga to push into potentially dangerous territory.

That is not to say I believe using yoga to alter consciousness is per se wrong, but I instead look at its implications as a normal westerner living a relatively normal western existence.

That being said, if I were again living within the environs of in a “protected ashram,” eating strictly vegetarian, and limiting the amount of external stimulation entering my nervous system, I might be inclined to push the boundaries of “visionary consciousness.” However, since I am not living in such a protected environment, it is my considered opinion that it is dangerous to push such edges. Not wrong, but dangerous.”

The Urantia Book appears to warn us away from this particular altered state of consciousness altogether:

“Under no circumstances should the trancelike state of visionary consciousness be cultivated as a religious experience.

The characteristics of the mystical state are diffusion of consciousness with vivid islands of focal attention operating on a comparatively passive intellect. All of this gravitates consciousness toward the subconscious rather than in the direction of the zone of spiritual contact, the superconscious. Many mystics have carried their mental dissociation to the level of abnormal mental manifestations.” [100:5.8–9] (PP. 1099–1100)

And it immediately follows that negative warning with positive instruction on what we should do instead: *“The more healthful attitude of spiritual meditation is to be found in reflective worship and in the prayer of thanksgiving.”* [100:5.10] (P. 1100) That is, the more healthful attitude is to be found in Jesus-style meditation!

MYSTICISM

For many readers, meditation in *The Urantia Book* cannot be considered apart from mysticism. In spite of the many places that variations of the word “mystical” show up in its teachings in a less than favorable light, the revelators clearly tell us that *“Mysticism, as the technique of the cultivation of the consciousness of the presence of God, is altogether*

praiseworthy.” [97:7.1] (P. 1000) How is this apparent contradiction to be reconciled?

Notice that the passage speaks of only one special form of mysticism, that is, “*the technique of the cultivation of the consciousness of the presence of God.*” That is entirely different from what this article has been discussing, which is primarily meditation as a technique of *communicating* with one’s Thought Adjuster (one’s indwelling fragment of God). It is quite possible to communicate with God without a “consciousness of the presence of God,” and the act of experiencing that presence may be outside of the realm of communication *per se*. God communicates with us in our thinking processes, but we *feel* or *sense* God’s presence.

Jesus taught that “*God is love*” [130:1.5] (P. 1429) and we are told that a “*human being can actually feel—literally experience—the full and undiminished impact of such an infinite Father’s LOVE.*” [3:4.6] (P. 50) In fact, we are informed that such an experience may encompass the acme of religious evolution:

“*Evolutionary religion is born of a simple and all-powerful fear, the fear which surges through the human mind when confronted with the unknown, the inexplicable, and the incomprehensible. Religion eventually achieves the profoundly simple realization of an all-powerful love, the love which sweeps irresistibly through the human soul when awakened to the conception of the limitless affection of the Universal Father for the sons of the universe. But in between the beginning and the consummation of religious evolution, there intervene the long ages of the shamans, who presume to stand between man and God as intermediaries, interpreters, and intercessors.*” [90:0.3] (P. 986)

If *The Urantia Book* gives us a technique for attaining to this divine, experiential love, it is likely to be compressed in the following:

“*When men search for God, they are searching for everything. When they find God, they have found everything. The search for God is the unstinted bestowal of love attended by amazing discoveries of new and greater love to be bestowed.*”

“*All true love is from God, and man receives the divine affection as he himself bestows this love upon his fellows. Love is dynamic. It can never be captured; it is alive, free, thrilling, and always moving. Man can never take the love of the Father and imprison it within his heart. The Father’s love can become real to mortal man only by passing through that man’s personality as he in turn bestows this love upon his fellows.*” [117:6.9–10] (P. 1289)

There may be other ways of experiencing a consciousness of the presence of God, but we should not,—again—in attempting to cultivate this experience, mistake

what is human for that which is divine. The scientific investigations of Michael Persinger have demonstrated that when magnetic “fields are applied to the right hemisphere (particularly the parietal/temporal regions) the most typical experience is that of a sensed presence, or entity.” Persinger remarks that the subjective “details of the experience are strongly determined by the person’s beliefs which are supplied by the culture,” that is, a Buddhist will experience the presence of Buddha, and a Christian will experience the presence of Jesus or God, and so forth. Persinger adds, there “are also likely to be many different stimuli that can evoke the same or [a] similar electromagnetic pattern and hence experience. Our experimental procedure is one method”⁹. In all likelihood, this experience is entirely a “reaction of the mortal mind,” or more particularly the brain, to various stimuli, and we would do well either to ignore it or to believe it to be of human origin. Thus, “*the steady progress of science add[s] greatly to the mortality of false gods.*” [102:6.1] (P. 1124)

Neither, in attempting the praiseworthy cultivation of this mystical experience, should we forget the warning against employing the “*trancelike state of visionary consciousness.*” That prohibition applies in every circumstance, not just in “meditation” *per se*. Likewise, we are to avoid “*such things as: physical fatigue, fasting, psychic dissociation [apparently the primary factor in initiating yogic and Buddhist meditation], profound aesthetic experiences, vivid sex impulses, fear, anxiety, rage, and wild dancing,*” [100:5.10] (P. 1100) which are said to initiate the “mystic” state, some of which are used by religionists to attain an altered consciousness, and all of which *The Urantia Book* implies are dangerous to some degree.

Altogether praiseworthy or not, *The Urantia Book* adds that “*when such practices lead to social isolation and culminate in religious fanaticism, they are all but reprehensible.*” [91:7.1] (P. 1000) And elsewhere:

“*There is great danger associated with the habitual practice of religious daydreaming; mysticism may become a technique of reality avoidance, albeit it has sometimes been a means of genuine spiritual communion. Short seasons of retreat from the busy scenes of life may not be seriously dangerous, but prolonged isolation of personality is most undesirable.*” [100:5.8] (P. 1099)

But the word “mysticism” itself, as defined circa 1934, included “a view or tendency in religion which implies a direct communication between God and man through the inward perception of the mind,” and that is almost a definition of Jesus-style meditation. And it is “*a means of genuine spiritual communion.*” [100:5.8] (P. 1099)

"These high-climbing souls deliver themselves from a multitude of the crosscurrent conflicts of the trifles of living, thus becoming free to attain consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication." [160:3.5] (P. 1778)

GROWTH AND SERVICE

Jesus-style meditation in conjunction with prayer, thanksgiving, and worship seems to be the *safest* technique for achieving the goal of Thought Adjuster communication. First of all, it does NOT require an altered state of consciousness. And next, it is in no way a short-cut method—or as Rodan put it, an "easy and transient attainment;"—depending as it does first and foremost upon growth. Not only does habitual Jesus-style meditation "favor religious growth" (see above), but "Genuine prayer adds to spiritual growth, modifies attitudes, and yields that satisfaction which comes from communion with divinity." [91:8.10] (P. 1002) It appears to be only with Jesus-style meditation (including prayer and worship), operating in a circular (more accurately, an upwardly-directed spiral-like), hand-in-hand, feedback relationship with spiritual growth, that Thought Adjuster communication can be achieved in a healthful, sane, and well-balanced manner:

"The Adjusters are always near you and of you, but rarely can they speak directly, as another being, to you. Circle by circle your intellectual decisions, moral choosings, and spiritual development add to the ability of the Adjuster to function in your mind; circle by circle you thereby ascend from the lower stages of Adjuster association and mind attunement, so that the Adjuster is increasingly enabled to register his picturizations of destiny with augmenting vividness and conviction upon the evolving consciousness of this God-seeking mind-soul." [110:6.5] (P. 1209)

But there is an additional factor which is equally necessary that must be added to meditation and growth (or without which balanced growth is impossible.) And that is service:

"The contact of the mortal mind with its indwelling Adjuster, while often favored by devoted meditation, is more frequently facilitated by wholehearted and loving service in unselfish ministry to one's fellow creatures. . . . Jesus often took his apostles away by themselves for short periods to engage in meditation and prayer, but for the most part he kept them in service-contact with the multitudes. The soul of man requires spiritual exercise as well as spiritual nourishment." [91:7.1-2] (P. 1000)

IN CONCLUSION

Although the meaning of the word "meditation" has

changed in the decades since *The Urantia Book* was indited, a study of the context in which the word appears keeps the meaning clear and unmistakable. Jesus used active, dynamic thought to contact and communicate with his Thought Adjuster, and he taught this method to his followers. This form of meditation is not without its dangers and disciplines, and those of us who follow Jesus today will do well to take heed of both the instructions and warnings given in *The Urantia Book* concerning Jesus-style meditation, and all other forms of meditation or mysticism that we may choose to practice as well.

In this matter, as in most, we cannot go too wrong if we keep our eyes on Jesus:

"To 'follow Jesus' means to personally share his religious faith and to enter into the spirit of the Master's life of unselfish service for man. One of the most important things in human living is to find out what Jesus believed, to discover his ideals, and to strive for the achievement of his exalted life purpose. Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the religious life of Jesus and how he lived it." [196:1.3] (P. 2090)

Peter Holley discovered *The Urantia Book* within weeks of a conversion experience attendant upon his having asked Jesus into his heart some 35 years ago. Presently he is experientially investigating the new, living revelation of Jesus as revealed primarily in Paper 195, Sections 9 and 10 and in Paper 196, Section 1. Peter understands this new, living revelation of Jesus as being the second part of Jesus' prophesied visitation of "an enlarged revelation of truth and an enhanced demonstration of righteousness." [176:2.3] (P. 1914) He currently maintains two "unofficial" *Urantia* movement websites, www.searchjesus.com and www.urantiagate.com.



Endnotes

¹ Webster's Universal Dictionary, Vol. II, World Syndicate Publishing Co. 1936.

² See <http://www.dictionary.com>.

³ See <http://www.squarecircles.com/matarticles/rodan/rodanparallels.htm>.

⁴ New York: Abingdon Press, 1930.

⁵ p. 94.

⁶ Weil also says, "Except for its voluntary and purposeful nature, meditation is not easily distinguishable from trance." A Report to the Ford Foundation THE DRUG ABUSE SURVEY PROJECT, STAFF PAPER 6: Altered States of Consciousness, by Andrew T. Weil, M.D. Available from <http://www.curezone.com/books/best/book.asp?ID=181>.

⁷ The writer, C. S. Shah, continues, "Another word 'mystic introversion' may be used in place of samadhi, but the use of word 'trance' is ambiguous and is, therefore, avoided." Available from <http://www.geocities.com/neovedanta/ascl.html>.

⁸ Private email, published with his permission. Sam Dwogkis may be contacted through his website at <http://www.extensionyoga.com/>.

The Art of Marriage

By Arlene and Buck Weimer, Pueblo, CO

(Below is a restatement of a workshop presented at the Summer Study Session in East Stroudsburg, PA on July 18, 2003. It was presented by Arlene and Buck Weimer, with loving assistance from Sara Blackstock, in 2 parts: "The Art of Marriage" and "Family Meetings and Discipline.")

THE PATTERN

The Creator Son and Universe Mother Spirit of Nebadon issued their "Proclamation of Equality" [33:3.5,6] (PP. 368-69) after She acknowledged subordination to Him, and He acknowledged eternal dependence on Her. They have equality in all endowments of personality, attributes of divine character, and authority, and are co-creators, co-rulers, co-operative, co-ordinate, and co-directors. This is the universe pattern for marriage—in order to have equality, each must "give" something to achieve it. Otherwise, some form of dominant/submissive relationship exists.

MALE/FEMALENESS

Sex equality is, of course, the norm on all advanced worlds because each is equal in mind endowment and spiritual status. On some planets, the male may rule in the early stages of development, while on others the female will rule. But no planet is considered having emerged from the stage of barbarism so long as one gender tyrannizes the other.

Alas, complete understanding between these two different varieties of our species is unattainable. As we seek for unity rather than uniformity, awareness of the differences is critical:

| | |
|--|---|
| THE CREATOR SON, MICHAEL: | THE UNIVERSE MOTHER SPIRIT |
| Is the deliverer in the face of evil, insurrection, and rebellion. He can transcend time, but not space. | Is active in ministry for the welfare of mortals and can transcend space, not time. |
| HUMAN MALES | HUMAN FEMALES |
| Are "reasoners," more logical, use longer time frames, view reality from the outside, and are more aggressive and adventurous. | Are "relaters," more intuitive, use shorter time frames, view reality from the inside, and are more nurturing and maternal. |

THE THREE STAGES OF AN EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP

The first stage of an evolving relationship is the "Romance Stage." At this stage the feeling of love is always present, you view your spouse as perfect, and mutual decision-making is easy. The second stage is the stage of "Disillusionment," when you begin to react to the newly perceived imperfections, differences, changes, and stressors. Separation begins to occur as one or each spouse makes relationship decisions

independent of the other. The work of love requires mutually agreed upon "decisions, decisions, and more decisions," followed by the act of rebuilding the trust and respect. The third stage is the "Renewal" of intimacy and passion in the relationship. Every mutually agreed upon decision results in closeness while independent decision making creates misery and eventual separation. This renewed love must be constantly redefined at each new stage and is the foundation for a willingness to resolve differences.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict resolution requires a willing desire to communicate, and some important personal and relationship skills.

Integrating the personal skill of assertiveness into our character growth is necessary and important. It requires that we display respect for self and the free will of others, while recognizing the fragment of God within. This means, of course, we have established personal "boundaries," and clearly communicate this "line in the sand."

An important couple skill is having the rules for fair fighting. The goal is to negotiate an "our way" solution based on the "highest good" for both. First, separate if angry and calm down before returning at an agreed upon time to clarify feelings and thoughts. Focus on one conflict at a time. Listening skills are critical. Each person needs to quiet his or her own mind while making a sincere effort to understand the other person's position with compassion. It is helpful if each partner repeats their partner's position to ensure understanding, which leads to tolerance, friendship, love, and forgiveness. Using "I," rather than "you" language is helpful in this effort. Seek resolution through brainstorming possible solutions, then negotiate, negotiate, negotiate until an agreed-upon decision is achieved for a win-win conclusion that is acceptable to both partners. Failure to achieve resolution is often the downfall of a relationship. This usually means one or both spouses have a "hidden agenda" or something or someone is more important than their relationship and their love.

The Art of Marriage can be best concluded with the quote on page 941: "Marriage, with children and consequent family life, is stimulative of the highest potentials in human

nature . . . patience, altruism, tolerance, and forbearance . . . brotherhood among all men.” [84:7.28]

THE ALL-IMPORTANT FAMILY MEETINGS

As decision-making is important for each individual in doing the Father’s will and for determining the course of a relationship, so is decision-making equally important for the overall well-being of a family. “*Human society would be greatly improved if the civilized races would more generally return to the family-council practices of the Andites.*” [84:7.29] (P. 941)

Establishing family meetings represents a paradigm shift in parenting, on many levels; i.e., weekly physical gatherings, intellectual sharing of ideas, spiritual equality, and social democracy. It teaches the balance between the self and the selfless while giving children the experience of adjusting their emerging egos for the welfare of the family. Life-long attitudes are adopted when children learn to negotiate for what they want, rather than scream and yell or be quietly submissive. Family meetings foster teamwork and solidify family identity. It is a time to agree upon family rules and the consequences when the rules are broken or exceeded.

GETTING STARTED

The most crucial factor in family meetings is for both parents to be united, “joined at the hip,” and committed to the long-term endeavor because most children will initially try to sabotage the process until they experientially know the family meetings work. Discuss your intentions with the children, or child, beforehand, then establish the day of the week, time, and place. Have a notebook to write down every decision made (children have wonderfully selective memories) along with the date. These notebooks will become wonderful heirlooms.

| SOME FAMILY MEETING DO'S |
|-------------------------------------|
| Invite all family members |
| Have some structure, Robert's Rules |
| Have a rotational leadership |
| Keep meetings short, 40 minutes |
| Begin on time |
| Discuss only family issues |
| Decision made by consensus only |
| Each vote equal to another |
| Consistency and more consistency |

SOME FAMILY MEETING DON'TS

| |
|------------------------------------|
| Be a required meeting |
| Dictate the rules |
| Food, TV, music, cell phones |
| Allow one person to dominate |
| Complaint session, personal issues |
| Meetings don't happen as scheduled |
| No decisions made |
| One parent avoids being there |
| Decisions not upheld |

Family meetings evolve over time. Follow the “book” rules at first, but as your family grows, it will develop its own identity on how to conduct meetings as everyone learns each other’s strengths and weaknesses, “games,” and hidden agendas. Consensus decision making becomes easier over time and will be made in many creative ways. As a general rule, when brainstorming for a negotiated decision, don’t allow one child to disagree with another until or unless that child presents an alternative choice. (One very good book is: *A Family Meeting Handbook: Achieving Family Harmony*, by Bob Slagle.)

DISCIPLINE—THE AUTHORITATIVE (RESPECT) METHOD

Discipline is one of the “hot” buttons in parenting, so again it is crucial for both parents to be unified and on the same page. One of the primary purposes of discipline is to teach self-mastery. Christ Michael, when teaching on Urantia, used the authoritative method, and always taught in the positive. Authoritative teaching is somewhere in the middle between authoritarian or laissez-faire. Authoritative means to show, authoritarian means to tell, and laissez-faire means noninterference. What is your choice?

A parent doesn’t have to agree with or like the decisions made by a child, but it is important to respect and foster the free will of a child—after the arrival of the Thought Adjuster. Differentiate between the child as a person, and the child’s behavior, and communicate that it is the behavior that is not acceptable. Important to good disciplining is for parents to have a well-developed self-discipline “...wise fathers do not punish in anger.” [188:4.10] (P. 2017)

A FOUR STEP METHOD

1. Acknowledgement of the wrong: “Do you agree . . . what you did was wrong, or against the rules?”
2. Solicit their choice of consequences: “What do you think the consequences for that behavior should be? (Again, “nothing” is not a realistic answer.)

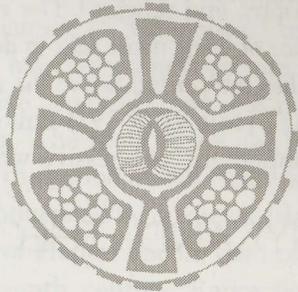
3. Parental input for consequences: "This is what I believe the consequences should be . . ."

4. Negotiate an agreed-upon decision: "Let's make a deal!" Each showing themselves as being negotiable by "giving" a little to arrive at a decision acceptable to both.

Family Meetings and the Respect Method of discipline offer a "win-win" situation for parents and children, thus avoiding the always-damaging power-struggle that children often carry into adult life.

"The Art of Marriage" and "Family Meetings and Discipline" are two chapters in a manuscript making its way through a small portion of the Urantia community that may someday evolve into a curriculum for "Preparation for Marriage and Family."

Arlene was a good Jewish girl from Brooklyn and Buck was a rebellious guy from a small town in Pennsylvania when they met on a Caribbean island in 1964. They married in 1970, traveled extensively, and then settled in Pueblo, CO, in 1974. Along with co-creating three sons (Jon, Matt, and Adam, now adults) they established careers: Arlene as a psychologist and Buck as a Clinical Therapist at a local hospital. They have been readers of The Urantia Book and devoted to its teachings since 1972.



*"Almost everything of
lasting value in civilization
has its roots in
the family."*

[68:2.8] (P. 765)

Room In My Heart

There is a spacious place inside my heart that waits,
wanting you to come and stay,

an empty room inside the house I'm sweeping out,
where you'll abide forever I pray.

The sunlight shimmers on a stucco wall,
rippling through the leaves.

It lights a space that meditation seeks,
a quiet place where shadows play.

Now since you broke my darkness with a golden ray,
sunlight that came piercing through,
I've seen this life was always in such disarray
true purpose I just never knew.

The dust and cobwebs of confusion too
are being swept away.

And in this house anticipation gleams,
knowing it's been prepared for you.

Dave Holt, Concord, CA

"A human being's entire afterlife is enormously influenced by what happens during the first few years of existence." [177:2.5] (P. 1922)

A Trace of God

By Steven Hecht, Acton, MA

Truth is not a state so much as a process, the process of living. *The Urantia Book* teaches this. This insight is crucial for postmodern religion and its understanding of divinity: God, divinity, is not to be found in a body of belief or in a body of knowledge. God is not a state of being, even the highest state of being. God is beyond Being. The postmodern God is divinity in the process of finding God in the other person, in the call, the divine command, in that to serve the other, to find God. In *The Urantia Book*, Jesus was able to describe this call as the kingdom of heaven, the will of God. Postmodern philosophy and *The Urantia Book* are able to say that the ability to hear that command has little to do with belief and everything to do with faith.

INTRODUCTION: WHY PHILOSOPHY?

We can begin by asking: Why talk about philosophy? Why talk about theology? Why consider the history and significance of philosophy and theology for readers of *The Urantia Book*? Isn't all this in the end a bunch of intellectual chatter? What is the point if we love one another and dedicate ourselves to serving the will of God in our lives?

We might start by considering that the word "philosophy" means love of wisdom. I'll suggest to you that the wisdom of love is potentiated by the love of wisdom. Even the

The love of wisdom, philosophy, constitutes one of the three aspects of our "reality response" to, and as, the cosmic mind, which the Universal Censor informs us is "the intellectual potential of the grand universe... *The Master Spirits are the sevenfold source of the cosmic mind,*" and this mind is "a subabsolute manifestation of the mind of the Third Source and Center and, ... is functionally related to the mind of the Supreme Being." [16:6.1] (P. 191) So, philosophy, the love of wisdom, is a response to, and a manifestation of, divinity.

While reading Paper 16, Section 6, one particular sentence caught my eye. That sentence refers to the reality response in this way: "It is this universal cosmic endowment of will creatures which saves them from becoming helpless victims of the implied a priori assumptions of science, philosophy, and religion." [16:6.4] (P. 191) I find this to be a remarkably liberating insight. It tells us that our cosmic mind, constituted by our three cosmic intuitions of causation, duty (which I call philosophy), and worship, gives humanity the permanent capability of transcending its static assumption in science, philosophy, and religion! The revelators tell us that "The experience of living never fails to develop these three cosmic intuitions: they are constitutive in the self-consciousness of reflective thinking." [16:6.9] (P. 192) Philosophy, theology, and religion are inherently progressive when informed by

PROGRESS IN THE REALMS OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY IS NEVER WITHOUT THE DISCOMFORT, CONFLICT, AND CONFUSION ASSOCIATED WITH INTELLECTUAL BIRTH PANGS.

most humble among us can possess a non-intellectual but divinely guided wisdom that will lead her into the secure embrace of the spirit of God. But we are told that "intellectual deficiency or educational poverty unavoidably handicaps higher religious attainment," just as we are warned that these intellectual factors also become "handicapping and embarrassing" if they are overdeveloped. [102:3.1] (P. 1121)

After all is said and done, the highest adjutant mind-spirit we are blessed with is the spirit of wisdom. The spirit of wisdom is "the spirit coordinator and articulator of the work of all the others" (adjutant mind spirits) and represents "the inherent tendency of all moral creatures towards orderly and progressive evolutionary advancement." [36:5.12] (P. 402)

our highest adjutant mind-spirit, the spirit of wisdom. This has crucial implications for how we relate to the truth and wisdom contained in this revelation. Are we supposed to study these truths in isolation, independent of the progressive evolution of intellectual inquiry on Urantia? If we study the teachings in isolation, do we learn those teachings more effectively, or less?

Continuing the paragraph, "But it is sad to record that so few persons on Urantia take delight in cultivating these qualities of courageous and independent cosmic thinking." [16:6.9] (P. 192) Progress in the realms of philosophy and theology is never without the discomfort, conflict, and confusion associated with intellectual birth pangs. We are reminded many

times how the human intellect often slothfully clings to the thought-patterns and religious practices that have provided comfort and security in the past. We are challenged to overcome this intellectual inertia because such a triumph can help to bring forth a new spiritual harvest in its wake.

Philosophy is founded in the intuition provided by the adjutant spirit of wisdom. Philosophy exists so that the material and spiritual realms can be coordinated—with the help of revelation—by the human reality response of cosmic mind. While religion is the mother of philosophy, it is through philosophy (and art) that “*the material-minded man is inveigled into the contemplation of the spiritual realities and universe values of eternal meanings.*” [5:4.4] (P. 67)

POSTMODERN, MODERN—FIRST ITERATION

Now that the identification of human sources by Matthew Block has begun to place the revelation into the context of the evolution of Western philosophical and theological thought, it would be timely to broaden our understanding of that historical context. The understanding of that common history stimulates intellectual growth and gives us a platform to better actualize our individual and group religious destinies.

“Materialistic secularism,” “mechanistic naturalism,” “thoughtless secularism,” “humanism,” and “rationalistic speculations of a material cosmology” are some descriptors the revelators have attached to what is now known as the age of modernism. The roots of the age of modernism are usually traced to the period of neo-Scholasticism (which itself was greatly influenced by medieval Islamic philosophy) and the writings of Francis Bacon, both of which occurred late in the thirteenth century. Rationalistic metaphysics and all the trappings of secular humanism were well established by the seventeenth century, which saw the writings of Descartes. The beginning of the postmodernist age is usually considered to have occurred sometime during the first half of the twentieth century, which coincides with the presentation and publication of the Urantia Papers.

Contemporary commentators agree with this analysis presented in *The Urantia Book*: “*In revolting against the almost total control of life by religious authority, and after attaining the liberation from such ecclesiastical tyranny, the secularists went on to institute a revolt against God himself, sometimes tacitly and sometimes openly.*” [195:8.6] (P. 2081)

The revelators call this the “*great mistake of secularism,*” nevertheless agreeing that western civilization simultaneously benefited by liberating itself from the imposition of a totalitarian theology supported by institutionalized Christianity. Both these aspects are represented in Nietzsche’s

famous battle cry of the late 19th century, “God is dead,” which helped to inspire postmodern philosophy by exposing the god of metaphysics. I use the word “totalitarian” not in its political sense, but as a philosophical term. The totalitarianism of speculative metaphysics and rationalistic theology is what has embraced and subjugated the living God during the age of modernism. Both the authors of *The Urantia Book* and postmodern religion rise in protest against this overreaching of metaphysical speculation.

One thesis of this presentation is that postmodern philosophical theology—through the spirit of wisdom and the reality response of cosmic mind—is dedicated to exposing the a priori assumptions of rationalism while transforming and supplanting the god of modernism, which is the god of metaphysics, the god haunted and hounded by the cult of the scientific method. Postmodern philosophy provides certain insights and tools that theologians use to effect this transformation in understanding. A certain vanguard in postmodern philosophy no longer allows itself only secular a priori assumptions. This post-secular philosophy respectfully admits the theological. As Graham Ward describes the thought of Emmanuel Levinas, philosophy is now in a position to challenge the assumptions associated with the rationalism of humanism and the Enlightenment, the rationalism of the modern age. Ward describes the desire and the challenge of post-secular philosophy:

“It can witness and speak of not what is simply inexpressible, but of the saying in which what exceeds what can be said has happened. Levinas calls this mode of discourse prophecy but refuses to locate it in the confines of religious experience. Instead, prophecy is a way to testify not by presenting a theme called responsibility but by speaking in my responsibility to others. The need to theorize becomes not a mode of cognition but a requirement of responsibility in relation to others.” (Graham Ward, ed., *The Postmodern God*, Blackwell Publishers, 1997, P.50)

The Urantia Book speaks in a similar vein when it tells us that revelation is compensation for the frailties of philosophy and when it says that, “*Faith most willingly carries wisdom along as far as reason can go and then goes on with wisdom to the full philosophic limit... When reason once recognizes right and wrong, it exhibits wisdom; when wisdom chooses between right and wrong, truth and error, it demonstrates spirit leading.*” [103:9.7,10] (PP. 1141–42) Postmodern philosophical theology encourages each of us to take reason beyond itself into wisdom, and to bring the love of wisdom to the wisdom of love. It calls acting with the wisdom of love the locus and the hand of divinity on earth.

Quoting Ward, “the postmodern is a site for the ques-

tioning and rethinking of the modern.” (Ward, xxv) This time of questioning can bring us through and beyond the assumptions that have characterized the age of modernity. It is possible that the contemporary influences I am about to discuss will help seed a genuine global religious impulse that will be able to distinguish itself among the leading faith-traditions now associated with the major civilizations of the planet. While we are told that philosophy by itself cannot nourish faith, it can certainly serve to coordinate the realms of science and spirituality—the secular and the religious. That improved coordination will undoubtedly be a characteristic of the global religion of the fifth epoch.

POSTMODERN, PREMODERN, MODERN—SECOND ITERATION

We need to compare how premoderns understood the world around them with the understanding of the modern era now passing. In medieval times, before the Renaissance in the 15th century and before the Enlightenment in the 18th century, people lived in a world or a cosmos that was, in its broadest sense, little different from the world of Jesus’ contemporaries. It is hard for us to conceive, but that world was not observable in the modern sense. Graham Ward compares the premodern and the modern in his book, *The Postmodern God* (cited above), by saying that there were no objects “understood as discrete entities, objects for a possessive perception.” Before the “age of reason,” the reality of things in the world was established because they participated in a divine order of creation, not because they gained an objective standing due to being measurable by humanly standardized laws of nature and human perceptive abilities. As Ward says, “All was gifted and given; corporeality had to be understood theologically.” Material reality had no existence in and of itself; it could only be understood analogically as part of the whole of God’s creation. The world and everything in it did not stand apart from a human subject who was watching, measuring, or manipulating objects at eye’s distance and arm’s length; the premodern world, including the human race itself, was securely and wholly secure in God’s hands as beheld in his eyes. It is very difficult for us to truly comprehend this difference in understanding and perceiving the world, since we are still ensconced in our own scientific, rational, and modern modes of perception and understanding.

The premodern era changed as the Renaissance dawned. Material reality gained autonomy from God at the same time the perceiving, knowing human subject did. The byword of this knowing human subject, the cogito, was “I think, therefore I am.” The autonomy of human reason was granted in part by the subject’s new perceptual talent for

perspective in art and in art by the scientific method, neither of which required participation in a divinely ordered chain of being.

It should be emphasized that the emergence of the objectified world, fit for manipulation and control by science and technology (which developed concomitantly with the rise of capitalism) could not have occurred without its mirror, the observing and controlling subject. The world was now an object for human investigation, epitomized by the scientific method, and the human being was now the subject who incessantly confronted the world before him with an analytical gaze from his eye and a measuring stick in his hand. The very world had changed, as had the humans in it from being bathed together and sustained in the vitalizing light of a common creative God, the world now stood apart from humanity and humanity stood apart from God. God slowly being squeezed out of the world and being replaced by human calculation, investigation, and control, now found himself placed within as a foundational metaphysical principle, useful in the systematic philosophies and theologies characteristic of modern rationalism, what *The Urantia Book* calls metaphysical speculation.

Graham Ward ably summarizes the transition from the premodern to the modern: “The created order takes on an autonomy, governed by mathematical configurations and geometrical relations. It becomes a timeless construct, a machine to be interpreted according to the laws of mechanics. The world is not gifted and given, but an accumulation of entities owned or waiting to be owned, property to be arranged, labeled, evaluated (according to the market and demand) and exchanged. Increasingly throughout the 17th century, this autonomy of the world (and the autonomy of human observation and reasoning which creates and reflects it) had no need of spiritual properties; it was a self-sustaining, self-defining, immanent system. The secular was divorced from the sacred. Only as such could the world become an object of human knowledge rather than a God-given mystery to be lived in a respected subject to the investigations into the causal nexus of laws which determined and maintained its existence.”

The work of the 20th century German philosopher Martin Heidegger makes it abundantly clear that the locus of genuine divinity is not described by metaphysical-religious speculation, what he called “onto-theology.” Metaphysical speculation cannot confer a fuller reality upon finite mortal existence that finds itself in its shadow, nor can it promote genuine communication with the divine. Heidegger’s thinking allowed philosophy to first seek the kingdom; it gave permission for postmodern theology and

philosophy to attempt to replace the god of metaphysics with the God of Jesus' kingdom of heaven.

Philosophy and revelation are both available to account for the shortcomings of metaphysical speculation and scientific knowledge; this is where postmodern philosophy and epochal revelation can join forces to first identify and then compensate for the failure of metaphysics and scientific thinking. The postmodern coordination of philosophy, theology, and revelation will help Urantians to better bridge the divide between spirit and matter, and in doing so may make the life of faith more accessible to mortals who desire it.

REVELATION IN THE POSTMODERN AGE

It is possible that the God we can now first come to know, now that the artificial god of metaphysics has died, is divinity that possesses "*absolute perfection in no attribute, imperfection in all.*" [F:1.19] (P. 3) I find it remarkable that genuine divinity can be described as being imperfect in all attributes and yet still be divine. This divinity is found in the very imperfect strivings of our everyday lives with others. As humanity hopes to find—to renew—a living relationship with God, we may initially find ourselves with a God perfect in no aspects and imperfect in all, yet still, the actual, living God. Perhaps this is where Urantia, specifically the West, currently stands in its quest for God; divinity is beginning to express itself in new, exciting, yet familiar ways.

Postmodern theology speaks of the difference between deity primarily identified through vertical transcendence based on belief (as in metaphysics and rationalistic theologies) and divinity primarily found through the horizontal transcendence of faith-in-action. One point of this presentation is that a renewed relationship with the former, the belief in the God of Paradise, may now first depend on our performance in the spirit of Immanuel, God-is-with-us.

As *Urantia Book* readers, we have been introduced to something resembling horizontal transcendence in the deity concept of the Supreme. The Supreme is genuine deity, and it is immanent deity: "*From the finite standpoint, we actually live, move, and have our being within the immanence of the Supreme.*" [117:3.12] (P. 1283) The notion of horizontal transcendence is illustrated in that God and humanity need each other and that the Supreme depends on our contribution of "the experience of love, joy, and service." Inasmuch as we bestow these divine gifts on one another, so do we include and help create—the Supreme. "*We evolve in him and he evolves in us.*" [31:10.5] (P. 353) Or, as the postmodern philosopher Emmanuel Levinas has said, "Man would be the place through which transcendence passes."

"The fruits of the spirit are the substance of the Supreme

as he is realizable in human experience." [117:6.17] (P. 1290) Postmodern religion wants to relocate transcendence from the vertical measure of belief to the horizontal measure of interpersonal exchange and human activity. Quoting Annette Aronowicz (ed. & trans., Indiana Univ. Press, 1990): "However, human activity reveals itself as pointing beyond itself. An act such as the protection of strangers, for instance, conceals within it a dimension of reality for the indication of which the use of the word 'God' comes to mind...it is through action, not through the fixing of the idea of God in our mind, that the wholly other, transcendent dimension is made accessible...there is a fight against a merely abstract knowledge, a desire to penetrate reality through the concrete and particular, through the act." (p. xxiii)

The "postmodern God" and the kingdom of God as presented in the fifth epochal revelation have much in common and can together help to instigate a fresh and unorthodox step in God-consciousness for our planet. Specifically, I will be discussing Jesus' expression of the kingdom of heaven and the philosophical theology of Emmanuel Levinas, who is a postmodern Jewish philosopher and religionist. It is probably a mere coincidence that Emmanuel with and "E" means "God-is-with-us," as does Immanuel with an "I" in *The Urantia Book*. Nevertheless, divinity-among-us is the living God of the kingdom of heaven.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AND THE CALL OF THE OTHER

Let us briefly explore Jesus' presentation of the kingdom of heaven as described in Paper 170. First, I would like to emphasize that his presentation was pluralistic in nature; "*he discussed the subject from every viewpoint and endeavored to make clear the many different senses in which the term had been used.*" [170:0.2] (P. 1858) The kingdom of God can be entered into in many different ways because it can be all things to all people without ceasing to be the same kingdom. The kingdom of God is able to supersede even the foundational rule of logic ($a=a$ and not b) without contradicting it. So I think we have to be careful about saying that the kingdom cannot be this because it is that, or that the kingdom cannot be that because it is this. For instance, the kingdom can have nothing to do with the Paradise Trinity for some people, although this same kingdom has everything to do with the God of Paradise for others. There are many rooms in the Father's house, many with separate doors.

The pluralism inherent in Jesus' presentation of the kingdom needs to be distinguished from various confusions surrounding the idea. For instance, Jesus' spiritual ideal of the individual's awareness of the will of God was often con-

fused because of his followers' socio-religious beliefs regarding a historical, cosmological, or theocratically based kingdom that arrives "with power." This latter understanding of the kingdom can be described as the kingdom arriving "from the outside in," while Jesus desired to communicate a kingdom that arrives "from the inside out." The midway editor of Part IV describes this as Jesus' "attempt to translate the concept of the kingdom of heaven into the ideal of doing the will of God...he earnestly sought to induce them to abandon the use of the term kingdom of God in favor of the more practical equivalent, the will of God. But he did not succeed." [170:2.11] (P. 1860)

And so we are left, as were the apostles, with "a double viewpoint of the kingdom; . . .

1. A matter of personal experience then present in the hearts of true believers, and

2. A question of racial or world phenomena; that the kingdom was in the future, something to look forward to." [170:2.13] (P. 1860)

Jesus wanted to embrace yet also spiritualize the "outside-in" belief in an exterior kingdom by teaching about "The kingdom of God in heaven, the goal of mortal believers, the estate wherein the love for God is perfected, and wherein the will of God is done more divinely." [170:2.17] (P. 1861)

Here is the place in which the teaching of Jesus and postmodern religion can begin to fertilize one another. I quote the revelation: "Jesus taught that, by faith, the believer enters the kingdom now." [170:2.18] (P. 1861) Postmodern religion, in my opinion, is well-positioned to open the kingdom from the inside-out as Jesus taught—because postmodern religion is able to embrace faith before belief. The religions and philosophies of modernism were liable to place the rational capacities to know and believe ahead of supra-rational capacity of faith.

The revelation accounts for the crucial differences between belief and faith in this way: "Belief has attained the level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. Faith is a living attribute of genuine personal religious experience...Belief is always limiting and binding; faith is expanding and releasing. Belief fixates, faith liberates. But living religious faith is more than the association of noble beliefs; it is more than an exalted system of philosophy. Beliefs may become group possessions, but faith must be personal." [101:8.1,2] (P. 1114)

These passages convey the difference between belief in a god ensconced in metaphysics and faith with a living God that is invisible to belief, even belief in the most illuminating of cosmologies. I am not saying that genuine faith

cannot exist in tandem with cosmological beliefs, as I am sure such faith exists with such belief for many. I am saying that postmodern religion has its priorities correct when it attempts to prepare the way for the individual's embrace with the God of faith before the cosmological God of belief can be safely re-introduced in this current era (through the text of *The Urantia Book*, for instance). For spiritual and historical reasons, the God Jesus spoke to (his dear Father "Abba") needs to reappear as our God-consciousness and precede the global reception of the cosmological God (God on Paradise). Yes, of course, this is one and the same God, but my understanding leads me to conclude that many individuals' ability to believe in the cosmological God (and the universe geography associated with the ascension journey) has been temporarily usurped and tainted by the negative echoes of deity wounded and entrapped by metaphysical speculation.

In the postmodern age, the God "in here" previously associated with the internal workings of the human subject of modernism is about to undergo a radical shift of orientation. Postmodern religion, primarily through the work of Emmanuel Levinas, has begun to distinguish between vertical transcendence of the divine and horizontal transcendence of the divine. It is my contention that horizontal transcendence of God will need to be realized in faith in many more of our lives before the vertically transcendent God can genuinely reappear for belief. Historically speaking, the vertical transcendence of God has been associated with God in heaven, that God out there and the God up there. This is the god that was supported through reason, through metaphysics, through belief. This is the god of belief, the god-out-there that Nietzsche told us died more than a century ago (and probably several centuries before that). What I hope to do in the last part of this presentation is to describe the living God active in horizontal transcendence: Immanuel—God-is-with-us.

The God of horizontal transcendence in postmodernity can be understood as the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven. The revelation tells us that this righteousness must "exceed the righteousness of slavish works" because service to another is spontaneous and sincere and results from the individual's metanoic transformational "change of mind" that builds the soul by accessing spirit. Emmanuel Levinas goes so far as to say that the call to serve our fellows is divinity in the fact of the other, is the trace of the face of God. It is the divine imperative that precedes our choice to serve, and even allows the very freedom of our free choice. According to Levinas, the divine call to serve manifests as our subjectivity as well as any universal moral rules it chooses.

es to observe. Levinas tells us that God is alive in our lives insofar as we respond responsibly to the command manifested in the needs of the other. "God divinity" is alive with us insofar as we set that command and our response in place of subjective desires and opinions, in place of standardized morality, in place of a god that is the conceptual product of rational and metaphysical speculation.

The revelator tells us that "*Jesus was never concerned with morals or ethics as such.*" [170:3.9] (P. 1862) Our response to the divine command to serve another is what makes possible the evolution of our individual identities and what in-forms the development of our personality. This righteousness is not the free will of a reproducible subject assigned to the objectivity of moral rules or ethical systems; rather, this righteousness is outside and beyond the subject/object order of existence. By responding in service to the

possessed by the other,' a figure of inspiration and obsession: 'for the order of contemplation it is something simply demented,' 'a seed of folly, already a psychosis.' Yet it is a 'reason' or 'intelligibility' beyond the cogito. Levinas is converting or translating the 'I think' of the rational Cartesian cogito (which founds modern philosophy) into the biblical 'here I am'... (Susan A. Handelman, *Fragments of Redemption*, Indiana U. Press, 1991, p. 266).

The Urantia Book's description of the hineni is "that inward and spiritual fellowship with God the Father which so certainly and directly manifests itself as outward and loving service for man... a genuine personal experience which no man can contain within himself." [170:3.9] (P. 1862)

There is nothing more consistent, nothing more insistent, than the call of the other, the call of the divine, the kingdom of God. The call of the other—the will of God—is

GOD IS ALIVE IN OUR LIVES INsofar AS WE RESPOND RESPONSIBLY TO THE COMMAND MANIFESTED IN THE NEEDS OF THE OTHER.

call of the other, we recognize the divinity of that call, the divinity of the caller, and the divinity of our person in response; we recognize and perform God-is-with-us.

In serving one another we illuminate the mystery of our completely unique personality and manifest the infinite diversity, originality, and exclusiveness of the divine in each of us. In serving one another we perform God's love and we see how that love is uniquely expressed through each of us. This righteousness is coming as a little child, the entering of the kingdom NOW, the "doing of the Father's will without questioning," the "hineni" of the Hebrew Bible. "Hineni" is the Hebrew phrase used by religious heroes and prophets when called by God. "Hineni" is said by Abraham in response to the divine call to sacrifice his son, and used by Jacob, and used by Moses when receiving the commandments at the burning bush. "Hineni" says "Here I am! Send me!" in response to the divine command to serve the will of God. The "I" that hears and obeys the command to serve partakes of the unknowable and now-known infinity that is both our source and evolutionary destiny. The "I" that hears and responds to the command to serve his neighbor is not the modern "I" we know as the subject, reproducible as any one of a number of knowledgeable subjects within the objectivity that subjectivity constructs and calls objective reality. The I that hears and responds is the only-begotten faith-son.

Quoting Susan Handelman from her book, *Fragments of Redemption*: "Levinas describes the 'here I am' and the 'I

to be put before all else because it is hearing the call, humbling one's self, and responding to it that constitutes the kingdom. But, like living truth, the kingdom of God is not a place and not a state of being. It is only the call and the doing in response.

"To every one who has, more shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him who has not, even that which he has shall be taken away. You cannot stand still in the affairs of the eternal kingdom. My Father requires all his children to grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. You who know these truths must yield the increase of the fruits of the spirit and manifest a growing devotion to the unselfish service of your fellow servants. And remember that, inasmuch as you minister to one of the least of my brethren, you have done this service to me." [176:3.5] (P. 1917)

The God that calls us in the face of the other is the God that asks us to respond and say "hineni" "Here I am. Send me." So speaks the will of God, this builds the kingdom of heaven. Speaking for myself, I am tired of applying to a God "up there" or "out there," even if up there is Paradise itself. Along with truth seeking, the revelation says that sincerity is one of the "two things essential to faith-entrance into the kingdom." [170:2.18] (P. 1861) Levinas says "The openness of the ego exposed to the other is the breakup or turning inside out of inwardness. Sincerity is the name of this extra-version." (Ward, 67) I can wait to directly face the face of God; I can't wait to serve the trace of that face, the face of my neighbor. Any God out there is too far away

for me; and God placed in a cosmic plan or map is too far away for me. Any God that serves as the Alpha and Omega of a system of understanding is God-as-object; that very systematic understanding makes me the intellectual subject, the standardized knower where God is merely an object of understanding within that system.

Obviously, I can only speak for myself about the God I want to know in the here and now. But my understanding of the religious state of western civilization tells me that I am not alone, and that perhaps I speak for a silent majority of believers, agnostics, and atheists. Is the God presented as the capstone of a cosmology, a theology, or a metaphysic the same God that Jesus spoke to as Abba; is it the God that inspired the action of the good Samaritan? Yes, and no. This ambiguity is for better and worse. Being an optimist, I see the better. I trust that a planetary awareness and belief in the cosmological creator in Paradise will arise subsequent to our positive response to the call of the divine, the trace of the face of God as the face of our neighbor: God-is-with-us—the divine encountered horizontally in our human relations on earth. We start herein the realm of faith-action, of righteousness, and eventually find ourselves capable of shared beliefs about the cosmos we inhabit. We live on a quarantined planet, and this planetary path from living faith to renewed belief may turn out to be a planetary phenomenon unique in Neadon. I don't know. I believe that postmodern religion encourages us on the path of faith before it opens the path of knowledge and belief based in a comprehensive metaphysic or cosmology. It is perhaps no coincidence that the Fifth Epochal Revelation gives us so much to know and believe in, yet insists that the mustard seed of faith is greater than all that.

As believers in the Fifth Epochal Revelation, we know that the journey to Paradise lies ahead of us. Is that ascension journey one that leads us "up and out," or does it actually—more practically and more spiritually—really lead us "in and through" as we better learn to hear and respond to the needs of our neighbor? Aren't we taught that we find God in Paradise only after we have consistently met the divine call in service to others for millions of years? The pre-personal divinity of the other that we hearken to in the living moment of service to our neighbor is the trace of that holy face of Paradise. That trace precedes any systematic or cosmological rendition of the source of all truth, beauty, and goodness, yet it will spontaneously, dependably, and actually reveal that Paradise source through time and in eternity, in finitude and infinitude. A Melchizedek father tells us that reaching inward, towards the other in service, is reaching for Paradise, is God-consciousness.

Both revelation and postmodern theology remind us of "our inability to ground, our inability to determine origins. Postmodernism reminds us we are already too determined [by] ourselves; we can never exhaustively account for the conditions which make the world, time, knowledge, the human animal, language, possible." (Ward, xxvi) That awareness may one day enable Urantians to receive the truths of cosmological revelation.

Postmodern theology, then, is comfortable with a "theology as discourse, as praxis [that] proceeds groundlessly;" that is, theology that "cannot think its own origin; it seeks and desires among the consequences of that which always remains unthought." *The Urantia Book* tells us that we are unable to construct a metaphysics that philosophically reconciles our origins in matter and spirit. That is why we need revelation. So postmodern theology and revelation say something similar, and both can open us to the horizontal transcendence that arrives as the faith-action of those who hear and obey the divine call. As this transcendence progresses on earth, cosmological revelation will soon become a matter of fact.

There are some, and Graham Ward is among them, who claim that "we have not attained to the postmodern until we recover for our time the world before and beyond the secular...In our time, a space is being cleared and a time is being announced that only theological discourse can provide with a logic. Post-secularism makes manifest how modernity hijacked for its own purposes the theological, the premodern. Simultaneously, it traces the outline of a theological worldview yet to be recovered. We are only just beginning to see what such a postmodern theology might look like." (Ward, xlii) "The emergence of the postmodern has fostered post-secular thinking, thinking about other, alternative worlds. In the postmodern cultural climate, the theological voice can once more be heard." (Ward, xxii)

There will be a new voice for God, a voice with which we all can sing.

Steven Hecht lives in Acton, MA with his wife, Dori Smith. Ever since he found *The Urantia Book* in 1970, it has been a determining influence in his life. He prefers to think of the book's teachings not as a road map but as a musical score, ripe for improvisation and interpretation—just as Jesus' life is not a template to be imitated, but a life that inspires one's own.



The Golden Rule in Business

By Larry Mullins, Boulder, CO

In 1923 Arthur Nash published a book, *The Golden Rule in Business*. During World War I Nash bought and took over management of a small Cincinnati clothing “sweat shop.” Bear in mind that such small shops were composed of inefficient workers who could not get jobs in better garment manufacturing shops. Wages were very low, and working conditions extremely bad. The highest paid woman in the shop received seven dollars a week—extremely low even for those days.

Two workers especially attracted the attention of Nash. One was a woman of nearly eighty years of age who sewed on buttons. Another was an unfortunate woman with a humpback who ran a machine. Both were being paid \$4 a week. Understand that Nash had taken over the firm with the intention of applying the Golden Rule. He could quickly see that he had made a mistake. Even paying starvation wages, the company was losing money. How could he improve the Pay? He decided the enterprise was hopeless, and elected to simply liquidate the business and buy a farm. He said to his son: “There’s the only place a man can be a Christian. He certainly can’t be one in the clothing business.”

After making this decision he called his little band of impoverished workers together to give them the bad news. Now, understand these workers were aware that Nash gave talks on the Golden Rule. Because of their working conditions, they had reason to suspect his sincerity. On that day, however, they were astonished when Nash referred to them as his brothers and sisters. He then apologized for not knowing their names and asked them to raise their hands as he called them out. He called the first name, but no one seemed to respond. Then he spied the little old lady who sewed on buttons for \$4 a week. She was raising her trembling hand with great reluctance. Nash was overcome for a moment because he saw a vision of the face of his own mother suddenly come between him and the woman.

Suddenly Nash’s plans were drastically altered. He blurted out: “I don’t know what it’s worth to sew buttons on, I have never done it. But your wages are now raised to \$12 a week.” It was a 300% raise! The next person on the list happened to be the humpback woman who was making the same wage as the other woman. Having set a precedent, he raised her wages to \$12 a week as well. And right through the entire list of workers he went on—to the highest paid

workers in the plant, the pressers, who were making \$18 a week. He raised them to \$27 a week.

Nash was not a compulsive man. He knew very well that he would eventually have to liquidate the company, and these raises would only speed up the process. Moreover, they would drain away the money he hoped to salvage to buy a farm. He cautioned his associates that the company would not survive long, but as long as it did they would be paid fair wages. Nash then began to pay less and less attention to his clothing business, knowing it was doomed but not wanting to watch the day by day disintegration. The war ended, and with that, business increased. About the same time Nash learned that a friend had gotten into serious trouble and was facing bankruptcy. Nash felt he had to help. So he went to his bookkeeper to find out how much money was left in the company.

He was astounded to learn that there was a great deal of profit being accumulated. Nash asked his bookkeeper how this was being done. She replied that they were doing three times the business as the year before.

“But how?” he asked. “How are the garments being made?” She replied they were being made in the shop as usual. “But the shop was running at full capacity when I bought it,” he replied. “Have you bought extra machines?”

“No,” she said, “the money is coming in and I am depositing it in the bank.”

After the help had gone, Nash went to the forelady. He asked her how the increases in production were being made. “I don’t know the numbers,” she replied, “but I do know we are producing merchandise at less cost than before you raised the wages. Take, for instance, the old lady who sews on buttons. You should come and take a peep at her. Somehow, her poor, old, crippled fingers have gotten limbered up, a look of youth has come into her eyes, and she is doing twice the work she was doing before. But the biggest thing of all is the case of the skilled workers. At one time, they were all loafing on the job. Now they are leading the way and showing us how to get work done. Garments are coming through in a steady stream.”

Nash was stunned. He asked, “Can you tell me how this came about?”

Reluctantly, the forelady told him he might not want to hear the story. He urged her to go on and tell it. It seems the day he left the shop after raising the wages they all stood

around looking at each other in shock.

Finally, Tony, one of the Italian pressers said: "I'll be damned!"

"We all looked at him," the forelady said, "and after a minute of silence he went on."

"Whatever this Golden Rule thing is," Tony told the group, "I don't know. But what Mr. Nash told us was he wanted us to work just as we would want him to work if we were up in the office paying wages, and he was down here doing the work. Now, if I was the boss, and would come in and raise wages like he has, I would want everyone to work like hell!"

The forelady told Nash that was about all there was to it. She said, "Our people just caught Tony's idea and went ahead in the spirit of it. That's why we tripled our output. If I talked for a week, I could not tell you more."

Nash said he would never have continued in the business world were it not for this incident. He wrote "...the foregleams of a coming day had shown upon me and I determined to utilize every means compatible with an adaptation and operation of the Golden Rule to demonstrate the fact that in the 20th century, enlightened, caring principles could be made to work—work successfully and not merely as a sacrificial ideal—for the mutual well-being of human kind."

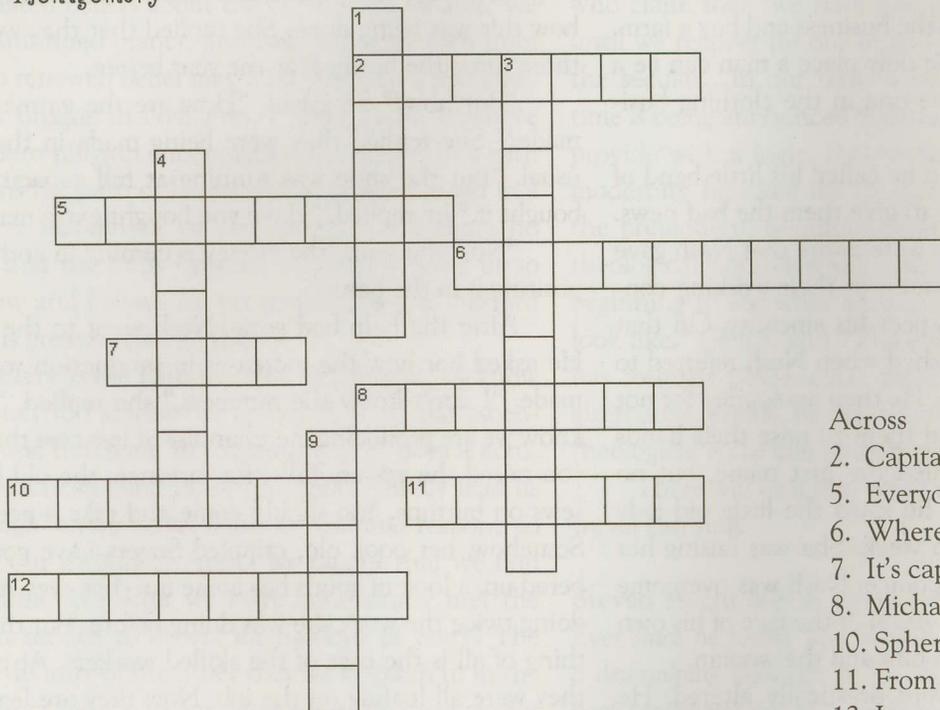
Larry Mullins lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife Joan and daughter Michelle. Joan and Larry are long-time readers, and Michelle has nearly finished Part III on her first read.



And now for the lighter side . . .

Rest Stops

by Chick Montgomery



Across

2. Capital of 3 down
5. Everyone's ultimate destination
6. Where you will meet Michael
7. It's capital is Uminor the 3rd
8. Michael's creation
10. Sphere of your nativity
11. From whence came the revelation
12. Its capital is Umajor the 5th

Down

1. Local System Headquarters
3. Our Constellation
4. The 7th Superuniverse
9. The natives are perfectly charming

Answers will appear in the next Fellowship Herald.

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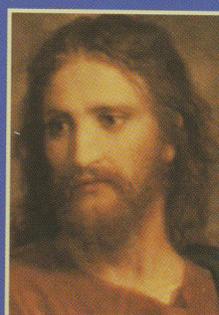
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“To the extent that we do the will of God in whatever universe station we may have our existence, in that measure the almighty potential of the Supreme becomes one step more actual.” [117:0.1] (P. 1278)

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