

"The Tortoise Speaks" vol II, no. 2

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Fall '77, the Poetry issue

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Introduction

-Stephen Finlan-

Here it is December, eight months after I managed to assemble what was thought to be a quarterly, now revised in concept to be a tertially, or at the very least, a semi-annual. Loyal devotees will recognize here the unique characteristics of the tortoise.

The previous issue was well-received and the tortoise members were pleased with it. Looking back, I have a couple little things to say; concerning the introduction: prayers *do* get answered; concerning the articles about sexuality, I would simply say: let's recognize that procreation has immediate social significance and requires social controls, but individual sexuality is a private matter. Also I would warn readers that with the tortoise, it is the head that sticks out; sometimes you have to see through the shell to see the heart. On the same note, I am delighted at all the women and new authors appearing in this issue. More!

I have shared the letters people have written us, with the authors concerned, but have been unable (due to time) to answer many of them personally. But we encourage response, and from time to time will print letters in the magazine.

There are three issues planned for 1978; and I would like to suggest three possible themes for writing: 1) world unity; 2) fiction and history; 3) personal religious experience. For anyone who hasn't already paid in advance, we are asking a subscription price of four dollars to print and mail these three issues. Literary submissions and checks can be sent directly to me or to the Brosnan Street address. Checks should be written to "Stephen Finlan" as I have found it difficult to cash ones addressed to the "Brosnan Tortoise".

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In this issue we are not using the headings we have used in previous issues, although we can easily return to them if submissions seem to fit the categories. One of the main themes since the first two-pager appeared in August, 1976, has been the "Marriage of Heaven and Earth". The theme has not been explained except in the context of the articles appearing under it, but I would like to rap a little about one possible meaning.

People's decisions marry earth with heaven. This is an ever-changing and adjusting process. With the help of God-spirit, any person can spiritualize his/her attitudes and extend a spiritualizing influence upon his/her environment, because his/her mind can intuit spiritual principles and his/her heart can feel spiritual sentiments. And this is true because his/her personality includes the action of real spiritual ministries.

Earth can become heavenly, but there is a resistance within the whole evolutionary sphere-inertia-which it takes strength to overcome.

Heaven evolving in earth is: an eruption of lovingness; a transformation of our ideals of fairness; a re-adjustment of our economy; an improvement in the art of parenthood; the whole process of progressive spiritual evolution. "We are all being transformed from one degree of glory into another, into the likeness of Our Lord." (Paul, third chapter of II Corinthians)

We embark our universe careers conscious of God's love everywhere, and of our part in doing his will.

Enjoy

Sunday
Sitting silently
By seething sea
Boiling breakers pound
Relentlessly
Against rocks.
Unlike the rocks
I long to melt
Miraculously
Into foam-flecked waves
Ride eternal surging tide
Ecstatically
To wondrous shores
Havona home.

I. geis

20 QUESTIONS

—Maria Sherin—

tell me teacher, who is the Perfect Master?
Great Master knows everything.

does he do everything he knows?
he knows no opposition.

is he on a physical plane?
he operates on the physical plane.

has the Perfect Master ever cried?
every man born has cried.

what color pajamas does he wear?
the Perfect Master wears the wisdom of the world.

how does he teach what he knows?
he knows.

can he erase pain?
he can ease pain and transform it.

what does he learn from his fingers?
he learns to touch.

can he turn inner space outward?
energy in transition is mutable.

how does he make love real?
he embraces all of mankind.



ADMONITIONS

--edited by Meredith Landrum--

(These Admonitions came through a truth-channel. I once asked my channel what was the difference between her and a medium; she replied "I am concerned with truth, and not with contacting departed human souls which is impossible, being against divine law." --Mer. Landrum)

(Jesus responded to all the truth in the religious writings of his day. We do not really know in what consciousness the Admonitions originated, however we wish to follow Jesus' example and honor all truth regardless of the circumstances of its appearance and expression. --ed.)

Begin and close any thought-words you send out into the universes for manifestation with: "Father, if it be in accordance with your will."

--On Thinking--

After you have contemplated on the manifestation of perfection in some area of your life with your knowingness, completely release it to God. When a lady puts a cake in the oven, the heat starts to do its work of creating a cake out of the batter. If she keeps opening the oven door and peeking in to see what is happening to her cake she interferes with the heat's work; the cake may fall. Keep the oven shut, my friends, and let God work freely without interruption by your imaginings of what may happen, how dreadful such and such could be if such and such takes place, etc. etc.

We would also remind you of a habit commonly practiced by many. This is *Split thinking*. There is no room for this procedure. Concentrate on what you are doing at the moment (in God-consciousness of course) and do not be thinking about something else, for in so doing your thought-force is dissipated. This is especially destructive when you think about something upon which you have previously communed with the Father and released your knowingness of its already perfect manifestation. Now you have interfered and that which is so desirable for you remains at a distance, for you are blocking it with careless thoughts.

In this matter of the contemplation of perfection manifestation in your life we suggest that you be definite in your discussion with the Father. A scattered conversation about many things is never very satisfactory between mortals—in fact it is pointless and unmannerly for it would appear that you are not taking your friend's conversation very seriously. Be polite to God. Commune on one thing at a time with him, and come with his help to some resolution which you then project out into the universe with the knowingness that he will manifest this according to his will.

Now let us discuss that last phrase "according to his will". You already know the importance of this phrase and what it means to all beings in God's creation. He cannot manifest outside of his divine and natural laws so his manifestation for you may come in a way you do not expect, but be patient and you will soon see the wisdom of his choice; it will always be far better and higher than anything you can have planned. This cessation of thinking about what you have put into God's hands does not mean that you stop listening for his guidance. He undoubtedly will have things in mind for you to do also. You and the Father together. He may want you to stand in front of a mirror and take a good look at yourself. What are you doing to create the situation or block its solution?

You use the meditation of your divinity wherever you are and in your daily contacts instantly. For you are God-in-activity and therefor you see the divinity in the man with whom you are talking and hold him in Christ-consciousness. Your meditation goes wherever you go and God experiences that which you experience because he is within. Ask yourself, "What do I want God to experience thru me?"

God reaches humanity through the individual. Your thoughts, words and attitudes could very well be a determining factor in the life pattern of someone. There are many who are soft as wax. They are so easily molded by your influences of thoughts, words and deeds, especially when they are open spiritually in looking to you for help. Oh my friends, be on your guard for the other person's sake as well as your own. You are momentarily creating your own life as well as that of others, to the extent they allow you. As you develop into spiritual leaders, please avoid pressuring anyone.

The ether is filled with the idle chatter of needless words. The word-sounds you use arrange the particles of energy much like an electric current acting upon atoms as it goes into a piece of metal. Before the electric current touched these atoms they were looking and moving in many different directions. But as soon as the electric current touched them, they re-arranged themselves and all pointed in one direction. Immediately they gain strength and power and are a force to create after their own kind—for good or evil—and go out into the universe. When the current is divine impulse, your words go out into all the spheres to create constructively. You are in a period of world history when evolution on all levels is moving at a very rapid pace, when the vibrations of the sound of your voices are bringing back to you manifestations of their kind more quickly than ever before.

Also in connection with words: It is good natural therapy to discuss your personal situations — the opportunities and challenges through which you grow — with a person or persons whom you trust not to repeat and scatter the contents of your personal challenges so you no longer have control over them and they are multiplied by the careless imaginings and colorations (usually negative) of others who unfortunately enjoy doing this kind of thing — perhaps not deliberately — but it is still dangerous to your manifestation. Here is an area in which you must be most discriminating: choose your trusted friends wisely after much personal analysis. Yes! it is fine and surely important that we see God in every person; give him every benefit of trust, but be realistic and try him out first for his own sake as well as yours. If he fails you, he can still be your friend rather than confidant.

The Apostle Paul knew of the potency of words. Do you recall he suggested that your conversations be 'yea' and 'nay'? Why? because Jesus said, "It is not what you eat that will destroy you but the words that come out of your mouth." He came to show the fulfilling of the law of cause and effect. what you say is that which brings about the results of your thinking.

While speaking of words, another thought we would give especially to persons attuned to using spiritual words: when a person develops a habit of using high sounding 'spiritual' words without following through in action and thought, he may be lying to himself, and coercion of others takes place. Unwittingly, this habit may grow and you begin to 'play games' for personal gain, and pretend things you cannot possibly carry out. Do you realize the desecration you are working on God's beauty? The desecration of divine law will surely backfire upon you.

We notice that many persons new to the concept of negative and positive thinking feel that they should never admit that anything is negative. They quickly respond to another's remark that some situation is not right, with "Oh, that is negative thinking, drop it!" Well just who do they think is going to correct it? Is it going to go away of its own accord? Rather does the realistic person look the situation in the face, evaluate his part in it, and admit this. Here again good loud words spoken to the Father are excellent cleansing therapy: "Father, I know I have your forgiveness for my part and I freely forgive anyone else involved." Then get to work on the situation with your positive statements and release them for the manifestation of divine law.

This brings to mind a powerful warning we leave for you, one not often thought about because it is very cleverly disguised. This is the danger of over-optimism. The extreme optimist will stand by mouthing sweet words while family, nation, religion or planet is in the throes of disruption, seeing nothing but the glamor of his goody goody train of thought. Always a situation must be recognized for what it is before it can be positively corrected. The calm, steady, unemotional, moderate attitude of evaluation allays the disintegrating power of both excesses of pessimism and optimism.

We would leave you with seven beattitudes:

Learn to do good a little at a time. Give, always, but not in too great quantities, lest the receiver becomes confused and overwhelmed. He may also fear an indebtedness too great for him to repay, and a friend and searcher may be lost to your help.

Boast not of your own teachings. They will speak for themselves when you are an example of heartfelt generosity towards all teachings which assist the spirit of God in man.

Live a life of contentment in simple pleasure. Too many lives are broken and end too early because they have striven to compress too much into too little time. God is never in a hurry. He moves easily and deliberately. Cannot you find great tranquility and real accomplishment in this?

The only thing on earth you really possess is TIME. Learn to appreciate its value. Use it wisely—neither in idleness nor pressure—that you may cultivate your great potential. You cannot crowd into one day that which was meant for one of the many lifetimes you have ahead of you. Neither can you recapture an unproductive moment.

Live majestically in your life expression. All thoughts and words should be carefully chosen so that they are those of a Spiritual King, expressing along with such loftiness of mind, kindness and humility. The greatest are the humble. Avoid talking down. Replace the "I-You" with "we". No matter how ignorant another may be, it is your responsibility to help him feel the kingship of the God within him. When you are both aware of the God within, a bridge of communication is established for sharing mutual thoughts.

Remember that there is no one, my friends, who is responsible for you for the way you express yourself in thoughts, words and deeds, except yourself. You will have to make amends on your own.

There must be this final seal to make right and permanent any manifestation which may come about from the Father through you—gratitude: "Thank you, Father". Do you realize there may be divine will and healing manifested through your meditations concerning some challenge of situation or health? But if you accept it thoughtlessly without gratitude to the Father, the manifestation may not be permanent.

Bless you and your work in the name of our Father and his beloved Son. When we learn to listen serenely with the inner ear to the voice of the infinite God of Love within us, this is our physical, mental and spiritual balance. When our lives are in balance then can we become cosmic causes. This is our responsibility and our opportunity. Our progress or failure to progress has a direct bearing on the lives of those with whom we associate. Therefore . . . we are our brother's keeper.

SELF-REALIZATION

—Philip Eversoul—

(will attempt to take us back to
Square One. Get ready!— ed.)

The laws that make selfhood possible are none other than the laws of creation. Selfhood is the primary creation, and all consequent creation is its extension and reflection on spiritual, mental, and physical levels. It is the power of selfhood—the I AM—to shape these levels to its will. Selfhood, individualized and socialized, is what the system of spiritual, mental, and physical creation is *for*: the containment and expression of the Common Infinite Self of all selves. This Common Infinite Self—the I AM Father—transcends all creation yet dwells within it as its very Center. He is the same I AM of each different I AM.

The personal Center of All is the Beyond Within. When you have found your own true self, you have also found the Common Self of All. Within creation—in purest subjectivity—is the Transcendent Personal Source, and we can each experience this personally. In this experience is our individual unity of selfhood. The I AM of each of us is not discovered as an object. Rather do we realize that the I AM is the subject of each of us.

You will never perceive the Father I AM in any external world—he is always beheld within one's self as the very Center of that self.

As the Infinite Self says "I AM ONE SELF", an equal Self-Relationship is established between I AM and ONE SELF. This act of personal will achieves Selfhood in distinction to non-selfhood, but this is absolute only on the absolute level. On our relative level, it is an ideal toward which we grow as we so choose.

Yet Self and non-Self are the Same Reality—the Same Reality divided. Creation begins with the imposition of boundaries upon that which has none, and the primary boundary is between Self and non-Self. On the level of the Sameness of Self and non-Self, beyond distinctions of Creator and Creation, one is in the realm of the Infinite Dimension, Original Reality, the Buddhist's Fertile Void, the Ground of Being, the pre-Trinity. This level contains, without distinctions, all distinctions necessary to manifestation. The limited ever dwells in the unlimited, and they are the Same. It is where we each came from, divinely speaking, to indwell creation, and we can grow conscious of this.

Consciousness chooses to create the interplay of Self and non-Self, leading to Other Self and ultimately to All Selves. Each of us in this interplay is privileged to re-enact the original act of creation as our own personal experience.

The supreme reality of Self, the very essence of Self, is Freedom—Power of Will, Initiating Cause. Hence to be conscious of one's Self is to be conscious of one's Freedom, one's power to determine creation. The more at one we are with the Infinite Self, who is Freedom, the more free we are—transcendent over creation yet within it.

HIS WILL

--Matthew Rappaport--

We have all felt the joy that comes of doing good to others, in whatever capacity we have served. But joy comes with service only when service is wedded to some awareness of citizenship in a universe presided over by the most loving persons imaginable: persons who themselves delight in an endless outpouring of good. Such pleasures in service have been affixed to every imaginable humanistic ideal, and to the end they are all transient. There are persons who honestly delight in doing good to others, but have no consciousness of universal citizenship. Many such persons have truly experienced the love of God but they do not *know* it, and that is a great disadvantage. To know that the Lord is God is a great delight which grows as we grow to know him better, and to better perceive His Will.

For many of us, there is a question associated with almost every personal decision made: Is this His will? How are we to enhance our ability to know what His will is? The answer to this question must lie in our experience, as we act upon those elements of God's will that we *do* discern. Every day we are faced with dozens of minor decisions for which there may be an option that *is* God's will. But one becomes worried if this concern extends to every minor detail. I am disposed to accept the advice of my friend Stephen Zendt, who says "Relax!" If we act to do the will of our Father in Heaven when we discern His will, we cannot but grow gradually in our ability to perceive His will in ever wider circumstances. Such action, combined with our prayer to know that will, teaches us to perceive it.

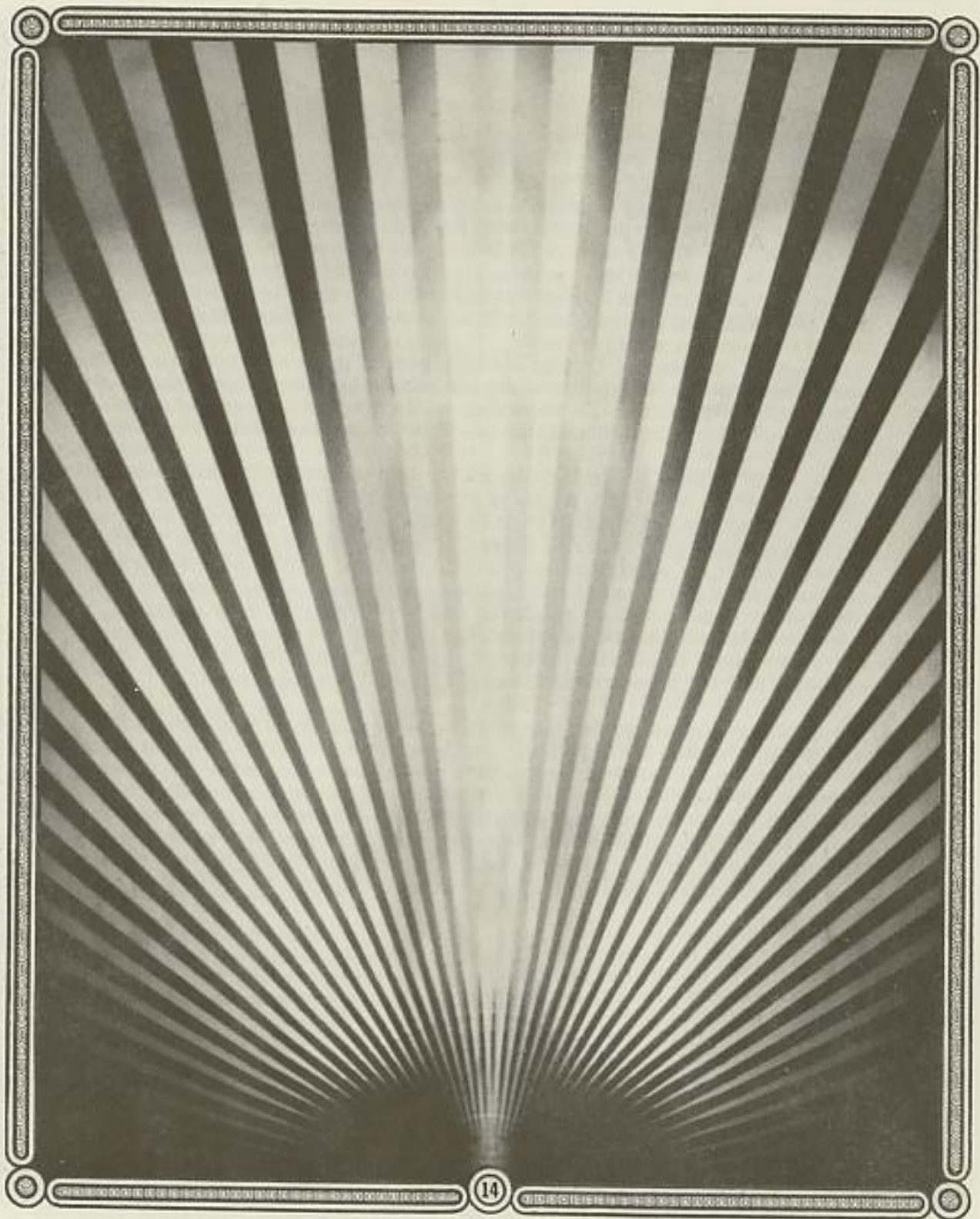
Our growth in grace depends on an increased appreciation of God's character: a growth in knowledge of His will. But such growth is predicated on our attitudes and actions toward that which we already perceive. As for that which does not lie within the scope of our vision, we ought only to be secure in our uncertainty. We must believe we will see, and that vision will be more true, beautiful, and good than that which moves us with wonder even now. Such a belief is the intellectual core of my Faith, but Our Father is the Spiritual core. In the end, He is the mover who moves us to find Him, even as He has already found us.

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Poem

--Sylte--

When I'm with you I feel tied down,
but without you I feel at loose ends.
What am I — *Shoeluces*?



LOVE IS LETTING GO

—Patricia Fearey—

When God has seemed to turn His face away,
I must walk on
Across all barren darkness, desert's test.
When I am dry within and have no love to give,
I must walk on
And grant compassion to myself the more.
Despair is prelude to a greater love
Than this poor vessel of itself could hold.
No wonder that I had to die.
That early glimpse of self as priest and king
Was true, but not for ego's opaque clay
In this formation of a man.
God has chosen differently for me.
When every pattern shatters at my feet,
I must walk on,
For only then can liquid light come home.
When there is nothing left of my desires,
I must walk on,
For then alone I Am, transparent for my God
To shine through me
Upon my world.
Thus I can walk in trust,
Fulfilled, complete.
I Thank Thee, Father, for preparing me
To carry Truth within myself.
For this no death is to be shirked,
My garden soil gives up its weeds.
I thank Thee, Father, that You see me
Strong enough to purify,
To use to Thine own ends.
Blind at present to Your goals for me,
I yet set forth,
To follow where You lead.
I walk in trust.
In joy I walk on.

'ariel'
dec. 5, 1976

POPPIES

-- C. Robyn Hunt --

(torn out,
reinserted,
timeless

from this the first death
of a grandfather)

He was
in his
garden

and my brother and I
will sing for grandfather always
tending his black-eyed peas

will sing for grandmother also
writing to me of them and of
Jack Frost in their garden
and always signing
both grandparents' names softly
folded into each letter

O the poetry
that grandparents supply
will run always
that soothing blanket of
backrubs, tea, and a dishful of bedtime
stories to hold between the teeth

like his leaning down from a curled pulpit
his tending from a curled warmth

poppies
plant poppies here for this man
for this single poppy
for this preacher

He will tend on
be that gardening conductor
that brings on
this new growth.

CENTERING
-Philip Eversoul-

The center of creation
is not creation
But Infinite Freedom.

The cause of creation
is not creation
But the Common Self.

Our Common I AM
Bestows his Self on us
Freely,
So that we each may say
I AM.

EMPHASIS
-Lori Short-

Who are those who put
emphasis on death?
Aren't they the frightened?

And what are we whose laws
emphasize money, while we
live in such wealth?
Aren't we the forever needy?

Who are those who emphasize
giving?
Aren't they the humble?

And who are those who put
emphasis on loving life,
wherever, however and with
whomever it may be?
They are the God-conscious!

Thank God.

† @ / / / / / * / / / / / @ †

PRAYER
-Glenda Kimmel-

Dear children of the Father, let's live the Truth.
Let's divinely Love one another,
Even as He loves us.

Dear sons of the Son, His Spirit makes us One,
Makes us real, makes us Forever.

Grow in His Grace,
Remember the place is Infinity.
Here we are alive and growing
Toward God's sweet and glorious Perfection.

Truth, Beauty and Goodness is the Supreme Law of the land.
We can all walk hand in hand
With His Holiness, His Highness.
The Kingdom of God is within is at hand.

GOD-EXPERIENCE: from the Scriptures of four Religions

—edited by S. Finlan—

ZOROASTRIANISM

Our God is Lord, most beneficent. We worship the most beautiful, the bountiful Immortal, endowed with eternal light. God is farthest from us and at the same time nearest to us in that he dwells within our souls.

*

A soul of the righteous steps forth unto heaven through the strength of the spirit of good works, along with the good spirit which is the escort of the soul.

*

The Archangel inquired: "Who are you, from whom are you?"

He replied: "I am Zarathustra of the Spitamas."

The Archangel said: "O Zarathustra of the Spitamas! about what is your foremost distress; about what is your foremost endeavor; and for what is the tendency of your desire?"

The reply of Zarathustra was thus: "About righteousness, I consider my foremost distress; about righteousness my foremost endeavor; and for righteousness the tendency of my desire."

The words of the Archangel were: "O Zarathustra of the Spitamas! that which is righteous is real. Let us confer now with him by whom you were made, and by whom I was made, who is the greatest of spirits, who is the most beneficent of existences, and to whom I testify."

Zarathustra thought: "Good is he who is the creator."

And Zarathustra inquired of Ahura Mazda (God): "In the embodied world which is the first of the perfect ones, which the second, which the third?"

And God answered: "The first perfection is good thoughts, the second good words, and the third good deeds."

BAHAI

The more you love, the nearer you will be to God. Love is one of the bounties of God. Therefore to love one another is good.

The bounties of God are: to love each other, to speak the truth, to sever our hearts from the world, to be reverent, to be humble, to be hospitable.

The people of God have no dependence upon the conditions of this world; they neither become bittered with the bitterness of the cup, nor do they become intoxicated if the cup be sweet.

—Abdul Baha—

*

Baha-ullah's message to the czar: "Hear the voice of God! Beware lest sovereignty prevent you from the Sovereign. He has come with His Kingdom, and all the atoms cry out: 'The Lord has come in His Most Great Glory!' The Father has come, and with Him the Son, who cries in the Holy Valley: 'Here I am, O my God, I am ready!'"

SIKHISM

He creates all creations, rejoicing,
Here are many regions, heavenly systems and universes,
To count which were to count the countless.
Here, out of the Formless,
The heavenly plateaux and all else come into form,
All destined to move according to His Will.
He who is blessed with this vision, rejoices in its contemplation.
But, O Nanak, such is its beauty that to try to describe it is to attempt the impossible.

+

Let Divine Knowledge be your bread,
Let Mercy be your steward.
Let the Divine Music vibrating in all be your trumpet.
He is the only Lord and has strung creation according to His Will.
Hail, Hail to Him alone.
The Primal, Pure, Eternal, Immortal, and Immutable in all ages.

JUDAISM

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all
your soul and with all your might.

The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of
the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

In returning to your spiritual rest shall you be saved; in
quietness and confidence shall be your strength.

The Lord is near all who call upon him in sincerity and in
truth.

"Look to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth. If you
seek me, you shall find me, if you search for me with all
your heart."

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my
God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has
covered me with the robe of righteousness.

For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes
the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God
will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the
nations.

"My spirit remains among you, fear not."

Book of Haggai 2:5