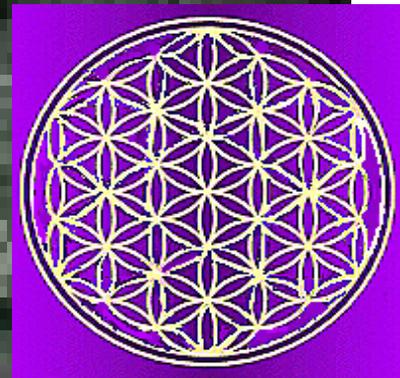
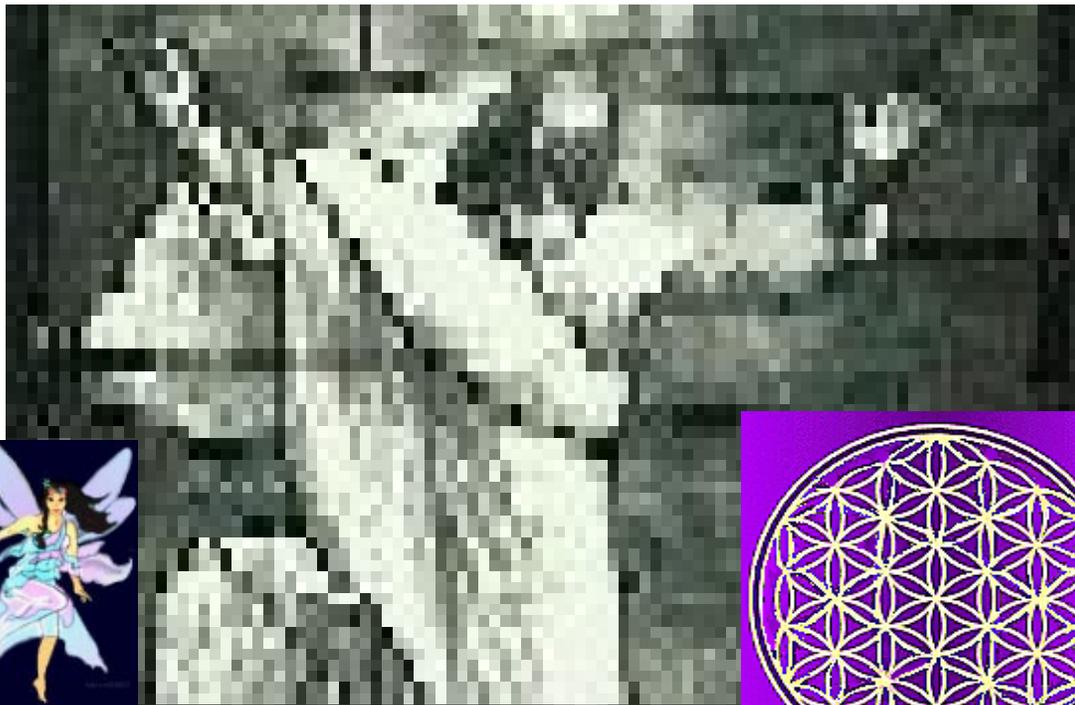


THE *Light and Life* JOURNAL

An Exploration of the Spiritual Universe

ISSUE 5 • AUTUMN 1998



THE *Light and Life* JOURNAL
ISSUE #5 - AUTUMN 1998

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JESUS, by the power of his personal love for men, could break the hold of sin and evil. He thereby set men free to choose better ways of living. Jesus portrayed a deliverance from the past which in itself promised a triumph for the future.

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THE *Light and Life* JOURNAL

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We are an independent publication dedicated to the educational and entertaining exploration of planetary faiths, religions, and spiritual movements, especially in their relationships to each other, and to the current evolutionary changes on the Earth and in its societies. Opinions of writers are not necessarily those of the publisher. In fact, we encourage respectful but candid debate of cutting edge spiritual issues and welcome your submissions and letters of reply. The Journal officially believes in the Urantia Papers as a foundation of spiritual truth, but not the only source. Truth can be most readily found through a close personal relationship with God but can also be found in other inspired works, even in the next person you meet.

Light and Life THE VISION BRIGHTENS

Dear Spiritual Seekers,

We have completed our first successful year of the Light and Life Journal and website, exploring many spiritual paths and perspectives in nearly 240 copy-filled pages, and hosting an international array of website visitors to hear some greater spiritual truths and explore some new perspectives. Our links collection of more than 300 spiritual sites will carry you to countless others, and we will be expanding steadily.

As you know, steps of faith are invariably rewarded. The Light and Life Journal now becomes an absolutely free publication at <http://www.lightandlife.com>. The portable document format (pdf) can be downloaded and printed, and we encourage you to copy the issues and share them freely.

The first four issues have been placed on the site and we will subsequently add quarterly issues, as well as a continuing stream of new spiritual essays and transmissions for your exploratory enjoyment. There are links to obtain the Adobe plug-ins for both PCs and Macs. It will likely take a little time to download these issues but hopefully, you won't have any other electronic problems. If you do, please advise us by email.

To get a subscription on paper, just send a minimum \$20 donation for four issues. That won't actually cover quick print, binding, envelope and postage costs for four issues. But who cares?

Going into 1999, new relationships are being forged to grow the Journal and website as beacons for Light and Life. Marty Greenhut, active on various email lists, becomes associate editor, and we introduce our editorial staff on following pages. We join in wholehearted collaboration and cooperation with his vision for the Harp of

God Foundation, of which you will hear more from Marty.

Together, we are soliciting the inspired offerings of other spiritual seekers as contributing editors and writers. If you would like to join this spiritual publishing program, write or email us.

If you become a contributing writer, you would be expected to regularly submit fresh essays, art and/or inspired transmissions for publication. As a contributing editor, you would be expected to do this, and also help us glean current news for issues and evidence of the planet's spiritual awakenings, and suggest or forward to us meaningful content. Pass it on to us so that we may truly chronicle and explore these eventful times in the Journal. We also ask that you promote the Light and Life website in your area.

The potential for the Journal is huge. There are a great number of spiritual issues and relationships that are ripe for editorial exploration by truly altruistic spiritual warriors who have the courage to instill a personal relationship with God above dogma, scripture, superstition, arrogance and egos. This is a huge void in the publishing industry.

Our foundation will be the Fifth Epochal Revelation of Urantia, and since it encompasses all things spiritual and synthesizes science, philosophy and religion, we will encompass all of this in the Journal. The only exception is that judgmental articles that condemn other spiritual paths, just as in the Urantia papers, will find no space.

We will increase our size, frequency, quality, relevance and reach as possible and feasible under the guidance of the Holy Spirits. We will actively seek ways to help spiritual writers find an audience in publishing, both electronically

Light and Life the vision brightens

and on paper. You are invited to join this journalistic adventure that intends to explore the fullness of the spiritual universe in an aura of love and service.

With Marty's help and others who will join us, we will build this editorial enterprise into a real Light and Life Force, forging the beginnings for what will be the inevitable fate of our small planet as we learn to attune to the Love Streams of the Holy Spirits.

The Light and Life website and journal will seek to become an integral part of Marty's vision for

the Harp of God Foundation and will work to nurture this broader mission of common goals.

As we join together, The Harp of God Foundation will endeavor to broaden our network beyond the Urantia community. We hope to make the Light and Life Journal available in the circles of religionists and truth seekers of all persuasions. This foundation will also focus on finding the capital to back and grow our publications and other networking enterprises.

LIGHT ON! In an expanding circle of love and a network of the heart ... Jim Cleveland. Editor

MEET OUR EDITORIAL STAFF

As we enter our second year of publication, meet our new staff. We look forward to many explorations and sharing entering '99 and the new millennium.

CALVIN MCKEE began his career of spiritual pursuit at a young age as a Mormon boy in Utah. Having a deep inner burning to find truth and reason, he was greatly influenced by the many Mormon scriptures referring to a "greater account" of the life of Jesus "which was soon to come," and which was to contain much information pertaining to: creation, times and revolutions of times, Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden, "whether there be one God or many," and particularly... "the greater things of the life and teachings of Jesus." Over the years, Calvin has been a family dairy farmer, community chairman of a small town, agricultural businessman, and sales representative. He discovered the Urantia Book and subsequently a Teaching Mission group in Woods Cross, Utah. Suspiciously, Calvin went there looking for the 'man behind the curtain,' who may be trying to throw a kink into this great 'Urantia Revelation,' but instead,

was immediately swept off his feet with love, common sense, truth and more love. For the next seven years, he found himself a personal growing/changing friend and student of father Abraham, voicing and sharing his viewpoints and understandings every chance he gets with his fellows who are doing the same.

N. ANGUS BOWEN, writer, editor, speaker, broadcast announcer, and sales rep. A 25 year student of the Urantia Book, a Teaching Mission associate, life long pursuer of spiritual truth and excellence via the self-help method (tapes, books and videos) and former student (2 years) at Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills, Alberta, Canada. Formerly: writer (radio & TV commercials, scripts, speeches, editorials, essays, promotional materials, newspaper articles); creator and editor of promotional magazines; producer, scriptwriter, editor and videographer for commercial, industrial and promotional videos; speaker; broadcast announcer (20 years); broadcast production manager; broadcast sales representative; director of the chamber of commerce and director of community and

economic development, Montrose, Colorado.

STEVEN HECHT, copy editor and contributor, began his spiritual quest at the age of 17 by reading 'The Book' by Alan Watts and 'Be Here Now' by Ram Dass. About a year later he found 'The Urantia Book' as his spiritual quest began bearing fruit. He has advanced degrees in religion, public health, and management of human services, and a doctor's degree in chiropractic. He now practices as a holistically-oriented chiropractic physician in the Boston area. Steven has a wide range of interests in philosophy, religion and spirituality which includes: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theology, philosophy, and mysticism; secular Western philosophy; postmodern philosophy and theology; poetry—mystical and secular, and; religious history of the early Christian church and of Islam. He also collects sacred music from the earliest times of Christianity through the present, as well as sacred world music. He lives in a co-housing community (a form of non-religious intentional community) with his wife, Dori Smith.

GERDEAN O'DELL has been a student of The Urantia Book since 1968 and a member of The Teaching Mission since its inception. She became a transmitter/receiver for Teacher Tomas in 1993. As a part of her preliminary spiritual search, she studied various Christian sects then went on to become familiar with the Eastern religions, becoming a practitioner of Transcendental Meditation during the 60's and has subsequently enjoyed the flowering of this spiritual renaissance. Gerdean's earthly career has included work in the legal and judicial fields and other avenues of public service. She is a portrait artist, the proprietor of a used book store in Western PA, and has written a novel which is pending publication.

CLAIREESA HUMMEL *tells a fascinating story in her biographical introduction:* I grew up on a farm in Central Illinois. Since my Dad's family were Lutherans, we all attended the Lutheran Church in town every Sunday.

Beginning at the age of 13, I studied in the catechism in a 4-hour class every Saturday morning for two years. Every summer we would visit with Mom's family who all lived in Salt Lake City (SLC), Utah, for a couple of weeks. There I was exposed to her religion, Mormonism.

I have learned from both Lutheran catechism and Mormon seminary, including things that just didn't make sense or ever completely answer my questions. But I have enjoyed learning about God, whether it was from the Bible, the Book of Mormon, Joseph Campbell, native american spirituality, "new age" stuff, etc.

But in all of this, something was missing. In fact, what I realized I had learned at one point was that God was a very fearsome God, full of punishments just waiting for me, an unworthy sinner, who could never be "good enough." I would say my prayers of thanksgiving, but I would never dare to ask for anything. But I was still seeking answers and trying to understand.

One day a friend said to me: "You might be interested in a book I've been reading for a long time." The next time I saw her she gave me a copy of The Urantia Book and I started reading from page 1. I was very discouraged to say the least and told her so. She suggested I start going to a study group she attended. The study group offered me a chance to ask questions and have discussions with like-minded people who were seeking these answers themselves. And so began the opening of a whole new world for me.

I came to hear about the teachings of Ham at that study group. I was very skeptical about the method of this teaching. I had always felt that "channeling" was very suspect. However, after 4 or 5 study group meetings, I came into the possession of a few transcripts of Ham's lessons. And I began to read.

They were so beautiful and my heart had no

doubt about their truthfulness. There was many a night that I would sit in bed reading them, crying my eyes out as those words of Ham led me to acceptance of the whole experience. So the teachings themselves led me back to Ham and acceptance of him and the teachers. I guess I sort of went in the back door.

As I continued reading the transcripts, they began to speak to my heart and soul. They were leading me to what seems to me to be the greatest realization of my life which was that my Father in heaven loves me. It seems so simple to say or write that phrase, but the reality of experiencing that love was very new to me. And as I read and studied the Urantia Book I found that it supported what Ham was teaching.

I came to understand that Ham was a great teacher and it didn't matter through who or how his teachings came to be in my hands. The message itself was what mattered and it was good for me.

There have been long periods of illness when I was unable to go to Teaching Mission meetings.. Finally in September of 1997 I had to take disability from my job of 23 years as administrative assistant to the General Counsel of a gas transmission company. After a while I had enough energy to start going to the meetings again on a rather irregular basis..

I came to the realization that although I may have doubts, faith was also an ingredient that was necessary in my relationship with God. Through faith and personal communion with Father, I have come to see that it doesn't matter how I received the message, the message itself was beautiful and uplifting and had made changes in me for the good. I am calmer, happier and more accepting of others than I have ever been before in my life. Sure the depressions come and go and the doubts and unworthy feelings still pop up now and again, but now guess who is there to walk with me and sometimes even carry me?

After a sublime experience on Christ Michael's birthday, August 21, 1992, it was suggested to me that I make an appointment to communicate directly with Teacher Ham, which I did in a prayerful attitude. I was there waiting at the appointed time and to my great astonishment so was Ham and also Daniel, another teacher. I received a beautiful message in a manner I had never personally experienced before. It took a while to digest and accept this experience. Lots of doubts crept in. But the messages kept coming and I kept recording them. Then to my great surprise I was told I had a personal teacher and what his name was. Well, a personal teacher I could accept, but the name really threw me. I told no one. I decided to ask one of the other members of the group about it. About 20 minutes later he called be back and asked me if my teacher was "X." To my astonishment he was right. I never doubted from then on.

I now have a project to collect, organize and format all the past and present transcripts to be compatible with a web site that has search capabilities. And now I have this wonderful opportunity to work with the editorial staff of Light & Life and The Harp of God. Who knows what God has in mind for me here? All I know is I am ready and willing to do His Will in all

WILL BOYLES, our Light and Life webmaster, is a 23-year old entrepreneur and cyberspace explorer, who sends us a statement about his spiritual search:

" I believe in God, as I do in Jesus, Jehovah, Allah, Yahweh, Buddha, Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesh, Krishna, Ra, Light, Love, Life, Flowers, Trees, Birds and certainly Bees.

" I recognize that religion, the institution, has served a pivitol role in the maturity of human consciousness and development. Like any other human institution, its excesses rot and stink if not disposed of properly.

"I do not believe in Christianity, as I also don't in Catholicism, Judiasm, Buddhism, Hinduism,

Islam, Communism, Capitalism, Satanism, Nihilism, Atheism, Agnosticism, or even Existentialism.

“Whomever You may be, and whatever You may endeavor, if it shines with all your light, love and soul, I will serve you, by whatever means presented forth, in whatever capacity high or low, whenever, wherever you and I shall meet. I will find great love and joy in doing so.

“ Should your endeavors smell, I will love and serve you, but not your endeavors. I can only benefit you with the lessons I have found in the errors I can see in my own ways. The final truth is yours to find on your own. This does not make us different, I have far more to find than I can see days. Godspeed to us all.

MARTY GREENHUT: Associate Editor

Born 1934. Grew up during WWII, experienced McCarthyism as a teenager, drafted into US Army at the end of the Korean conflict and served as a Chaplain's Assistant after graduation from Yeshiva College and the Hebrew Teachers Institute.

I abandoned my career in teaching in 1965 when I gave up on the education system. (MA in Special Education from Columbia University)

Organizer for Poor People's Campaign.

Published The Aquarian Herald (underground newspaper) and the Peace-Rights News (Journal for the peace and rights movements) from my own print shop.

Published the Armageddon Handbook, 1970 when I received the Urantia Book.

Work experience: Farmer, carpenter, builder, bodger, forester (woodcutter), garbage man, waiter, janitor, house painter, roofer, mason, mechanic, washing machine repairman, coin-op laundry rooms, printing business, salesman.

Family: Married twenty-nine years to Gloria. Given a son, Isaac, born 1975. Presently retired on Social Security and organizing the Harp of God Foundation.

I would not change one moment of my life. I am blessed with the greatest gifts of God.

JIM FOSTER

I was born and raised in southern California , experimented with metaphysics and many different religions and various states of “higher consciousness” by the age of 16 . My only bible at the time was” Be Here Now,” by Ram Dass .

Realizing that there was a God out there that loves us more than we could EVER imagine , and seeing that this world was somewhat out of kilter, I prayed fervently for God to answer my prayers , to show me the truth that I yearned for .

After a tour in the Navy and several careers and marriages , I opened up the Urantia Book in 1985. After skimming a few pages,(and knowing full well I was alone) , a voice rang out inside my head saying “your search is over , this is the book you've been looking for.”

Shockingly convinced , I've delved into it since then , going to study groups in California , Utah , and starting one here in Oklahoma. Then I learned about the Teaching Mission, and my interest in the book has intensified even further.

Currently I live in Northwest Oklahoma ,next to a river that is so scenic, it takes your breath away ,run a handyman business and do a lot of scuba diving and fishing. I live with a gal who's a radiant angel, named Wahlelle, and her gifted son Wesley. For kicks we like to visit nursing homes to cheer folks up; such a life on such a planet. Love and Blessings , Jim

Love, Light, and Life to all of you readers too. We hope you will enjoy our work, and find perspectives that will lead you to Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

A Profound Question: Are We Separate or One With God?

by E.J. LIGHT
ejlight@Light-Mission.org

A profound question got asked. (It is your question, in a different form, a different manner, but really your deep rooted question).

“We are part of God, and indestructible too. When, why and how did this part become separated from the source? And is a reunion of the part to the source - an inseparable union - possible or not? If it is possible, then please unite this part to the source so that it doesn't have to be frightened coming into this tumultuous chaos again and again ?”

Is it not your question?

“We are part of God and indestructible too.”

Does one know this? One has heard it, one has read it and it gives one's ego great satisfaction. One believed it. What could give ego more satisfaction than saying that one is part of God, one is God, one is divine, one is indestructible? This is what you want. This is the search of the ego, this is the deepest desire — that you should become indestructible, God, the lord of the whole universe.

“When, why and how did this part become separated from the source ?”

If you really “know” that you are part of God, then you know that you have never been separated. Yes you have had a dream of separation. The part can exist only with the whole. You have forgotten. You cannot be separated, but you can forget. There is no way to be separate. We remain what we are; we may forget it, or we may remember it — the difference is only of forgetting and remembering.

Asleep at night, you dream you are a donkey. In the morning you awake and are asking, “When, why and how did I become a donkey?” You never became a donkey, if you had, would there be anybody left to ask? Donkeys do not ask questions. You only dreamed it.

Remember you were not a donkey even when you were dreaming that you were a donkey, you were just completely absorbed in the feeling that you were a donkey. In a dream you were identified with a donkey and thus you became one. Now you are identified with a human body and you become a man or woman. You become that with which you identify yourself.

“And is reunion of the part to the source - an inseparable

union possible or not ?”

When there is no separation, seeking reunion is nonsense. That is why practice of Liberation prevents Liberation. If you have never left your house, all efforts to return home prevents you from waking up to the fact that you never left.

A profound question? And there are dime a dozen so-called gurus who are ever ready to answer such questions. Even if you do not ask, these gurus are ready to answer, they are looking for you.

God is our nature, but we can forget our nature. This too is intrinsic to our nature that we can forget our nature.

The same “profound question” in a “spiritualistic” manner: “If the soul is pure consciousness, freedom and infinite energy, supreme independence, how was desire born?”

This too is the independence of our being — that if it wants to desire, it can desire. If our being could not desire, then it would be limited, dependent. Just consider, this world is your freedom. You wanted it, so it happened. Your desire is free. If you wish it ceases right now. If you wish it is back immediately.

Your being's ultimate freedom is that when it wants, it can forget that it is free and when it wants it can remember. If this possibility did not exist, then being would be confined, it's freedom would be limited.

Look deeper and you can see that God has the power even to deceive himself. If not, he would be limited. What sort of a God would he be if he could not dream? Then he would be limited because he is incapable of dreaming.

No, the divine can dream. You are the divine dreaming. You can wake up, or continue dreaming, this ability is yours. Man's freedom is unrestrained. The power of your being is unrestrained. Truth and Dream — they are the ultimate's two streams, everything is contained in these two streams. It is your choice. If you want to forget, no one can stop you. If you want to remember, no one can stop you.

Even if you want to forget God, there is no objection. God does not harass you. If you want to oppose him, he still remains with you, continues giving you energy.

The Sufi mystic Hassan writes: “One night I asked God — who is the most religious person in the village ? God

replied to me, it was the neighbor next door.”

Hassan had never thought about this neighbor. He was a simple, straightforward man, living quietly, an ordinary man, in his own joy — nothing to do with anyone else. No one had given him any notice.

The next morning Hassan goes to his neighbor and exclaims “what a radiance the man has.” The next night Hassan asks God. “Now another question. It is good what you told me, he is indeed the most religious man, I have made him my guru and I will worship him and bow down to him. Now tell me one more thing—who is the worst rascal in this village—so I can avoid him ?”

God replied “the same guy.”

Hassan said, “This is really confusing. This is too much. Stop talking like that and tell me straight and clear.”

God replied, “What can I do ? Last night he was in a beautiful mood, now he is in a bad mood. I can not do anything. I can not even say what state he will be in by the morning. He could be in a good mood again.”

Your being is ultimate freedom. Nothing limits it. Call it moksha or Liberation. Moksha includes the freedom to forget. What liberation would it be if you weren't free to come out of it when you want it ?

What would commuting of the sentence by the judge be, if he forbids you to go back to your cell if you wanted it, felt cozy in it, wished to sleep a bit more in familiar comfort?

Let There Be Light — Always In All Ways
<http://www.Light-Mission.org>

“If you want to see the Rainbow, you have to put up with the Rain”

OTHER PROFOUND QUESTIONS (:

If man evolved from apes why do we still have apes?

If a mute kid swears does his mother wash his hands with soap?

If a man stands in the middle of the forest speaking and there is no woman around to hear him. Is he still wrong?

If someone with multiple personalities threatens suicide....is it considered a hostage situation?

BEAUTY TIPS

by Audrey Hepburn

For attractive lips,
Speak words of kindness.

For lovely eyes,
Seek out the good in people.

For a slim figure,
Share your food with the hungry.

For beautiful hair,
Let a child run his fingers through it once a day.

For poise,
Walk with the knowledge you'll never walk alone.

People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed. Never throw out anybody.

Remember: if you ever need a helping hand, you'll find one at the end of your arm.

As you grow older you will discover that you have two hands. One for helping yourself, the other for helping others.

GOD'S BOXES OF LOVE

I have in my hands two boxes
Which God gave me to hold
He said, "Put all your sorrows in the black,
And all your joys in the gold."

I heeded his words, and in the two boxes
Both my joys and sorrows I store
But though the gold became heavier each day
The black was as light as before

With curiosity, I opened the black
I wanted to find out why
And I saw, in the base of the box, a hole
Which my sorrows had fallen out by

I showed the hole to God, and mused aloud,
"I wonder where my sorrows could be."
He smiled a gentle smile at me.
"My child, they're all here with me."

I asked, "God, why give me the boxes,
"Why the gold, and the black with the hole?"
"My child, the gold is for you to count your blessings, the black is for you to let go.

URANTIA PAPERS STUDIES: *In Search of the Error So Great*

by **NANCY JOHNSON**

A Paper originally presented at the International Conference of Urantia Book Readers in Snowmass, CO, in 1995.

Forms are valueless when lessons are learned. No chick may be had without the shell, and no shell is of any worth after the chick is hatched. But sometimes error is so great that its rectification by revelation would be fatal to those slowly emerging truths, which are essential to its experiential overthrow. (Urantia Book - p. 554-555)

No doubt we have all paid attention service to this provocative statement by an archangel from Nebadon, and surely this archangel intended to pique our curiosity and stimulate us to examine our conceptual environment — our belief system— to recognize an error that's so out of sync with true reality that they couldn't tell us what it was. What truth could have had so much a traumatic impact on us at that time? Did they give us any clue?

Consider for a moment the nature of the following conceptual errors, presented in arbitrary order, which the revelators did not hesitate to correct.

***There is no hell.** When we die we do not proceed directly to the right hand of God where we will somehow become magically perfect, even as he is perfect. Rather do we proceed to the mansion world where we take up exactly where we left off here and where we will encounter numerous other creatures who may appear somewhat different from ourselves and who were born on other worlds.

***While Jesus, whose real name is Michael, is a Creator Son of God, he is not the second person of the trinity. Nor did come here to die for our sins in order to appease an offended God. God is not like that.**

***Jesus was not born of a virgin. He came into the world in the same manner as all children before and since.**

***While it contains the best collection of inspired writings available on our world, the Bible is not THE word of God, much less the "final" world of God. It contains error, parts of it are not inspired, and some parts were not written by the author to whom they were ascribed. Revelation will continue throughout the ages.**

***Adam and Eve were not the first human beings on our world; in fact, were transported here nearly a million years after the first mortals evolved in order to upstep the human race and become its spiritual leaders. They would still be here except that they defaulted in their mission. Of the battle that rages between the evolutionists and creationists, it can simply be stated that both sides are correct.**

***It doesn't matter, in the ceremony of baptism, whether we sprinkle, pour, or dunk. It's just a ceremony insisted on by Jesus' followers; he only required that we be born of the "spirit." We do not have to be baptized a Christian in order to be saved. While it is true that no one goes to the Father except through Christ, that path may be encountered after we leave this world.**

***Since Jesus' time the devil has no power to invade the normal mind (we are responsible for our own misbehavior); we do not reincarnate (we have only one trial life in the flesh); astrology is a mass of superstitious error which has no place in the kingdom; charms and relics are impotent to heal disease; magic and witchcraft are superstitious of ignorant minds.**

This list could be expanded considerably, but the point to be made here is that the revelators did not hesitate to refute these cherished beliefs of ours— beliefs so strong that wars have been proudly fought and lives willingly sacrificed in a noble and courageous attempt to defend them.

The kind of error we're looking for couldn't possibly be found in the realm of religious dogma. Each school of religious beliefs has its own dogma, while too many mortals have no religious belief at all. The error must have to do with a misperception that everyone shares — unquestionably an error set in motion at the time of the Lucifer rebellion and the Caligastia betrayal of our world—and one which hits us at the "supposed" core of our very being. But what could it be? And if we're oblivious to the error, how will we recognize the truth? Surely they gave some clues.

What was uppermost in the mindset of the world in the mid' 30s that prevented the revelators from correcting this great error in our belief system? Material survival? These people had just stepped out of the first world war. They were face to face with the setback of devastating depression and were on the brink of engaging in another world war where attack seem justified. Science and technology were just beginning to blossom, psychology was regarded as a pseudoscience, and few people believe there might be life on other worlds.

Today's problems are not better or worse, but our lifestyle is drastically different. Overall we're much better educated and have more time to think and ponder the solution of our problems from a higher perspective. Has the mindset changed sufficiently in recent time to allow correction of the error? These words from a Melchizedek would lead us to believe that it is at least "possible" when he said:

Because your world is generally ignorant of origins, even of physical origins, it has appeared to be wise from time to time to provide instruction in cosmology. And always has this made trouble for the future. The laws of revelation hamper us greatly by their proscription of the impartation of unearned or premature knowledge. Any cosmology presented as a part of revealed religion is destined to be outgrown in a very short time. Accordingly, future students of such a revelation are tempted to discard any element of genuine religious truth it may contain because they discover errors on the face of the associated cosmologies therein presented. (P 1109)

Forty years later another revelation appeared on the scene: A COURSE IN MIRACLES. The author is presumably Christ himself (or possibly the Spirit of truth speaking for him). According to the author, our perception of reality is totally off base. Our ego minds think the material word is the real word and that our bodies prove that we're all separate beings, blinding us to our oneness. In this world of non reality, our ego minds try to reign supreme, even demanding that we see ourselves as separate so we can exploit our specialness and justify attacking one another. The ego's only purpose is to survive; it doesn't even concern itself with right thinking. The purpose of the course is to teach how to forget everything we think we know and let the Holy Spirit correct our perception for us. It is time, he says, to correct the ANCIENT misperception, heal the separation, and begin living as God created us—as one.

The text was difficult to study—oftentimes frustrating in its repetitious hammering away at a single theme. I was sometimes disturbed as it hit upon areas into which I had personally invested some reality, saying it had no reality. Only toward the end did I begin to see the point of it all, but perhaps that wouldn't have been possible without reading The Urantia Book first.

By the time I finished studying the text of ACIM, I could begin to understand the validity of its claim that we have split mind (material [ego] mind/cosmic {spirit}mind), with the ego mind investing enormous energy in self-defeating

judgements about ourselves and others that have no reality in eternity. The invitation was for all who would participate as miracle workers to suspend all judgements about anything we can perceive through our material senses, holding ourselves and others as blameless of any wrongdoing, while the Holy Spirit lets us see who we really are and heals the separation.

In all subsequent readings of The Urantia Book I noticed a remarkable number of statements which would support the claims in ACIM, and I began to wonder if these were the clues—an attempt on the part of the revelators to condition us to recognize the GREAT ERROR when the time was right.

An archangel of Nebadon revealed his technique of conveying ideas by IMPLICATION, and I observed that this technique was effectively used by many of the other authors also. Referring to the Harmony Workers, he said:

If I had the least possible basis for comparison, I would attempt to portray this unique field of spirit achievement, but I despair—there is no hope of conveying to mortal minds this sphere of celestial artistry. Nevertheless, that which cannot be described may still be implied: (P 507)

He then painted a word picture that each reader might interpret according to his/her comprehension capacity. The revelators told us that they were handicapped by the necessity of describing spiritual realities in distorted form so they might be at least partially comprehended by the material intellect. The excerpts from The Urantia Book used in this presentation pertain mostly to the nature of material personality, material mind, and the soul as they would be described from the Paradise viewpoint and which are more in alignment with statements made in ACIM. (Capitals are inserted for emphasis.) Some of these statements from the Book are subtle and imbedded in heavy subject matter so they may be easily overlooked by the material intellect but are nevertheless registered on the brain; others are direct and blunt. All together they clearly imply that our material existence is nothing more than a means to an end. This may be what the Archangel meant when he said, "No chick may be had without the shell, and no shell is of any worth after the chick is hatched."

ACIM tells us to wake up from our dreams and remember who we are—that we're not who we are. As far as they had permission to, I believe the revelators of The Urantia Book tried to tell us the same thing. In Paper 1 a Divine Counselor says:

Human personality is the time-space image-SHADOW

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cast by the divine Creator personality. And no actuality can ever be adequately comprehended by an examination of its shadow. SHADOWS SHOULD BE INTERPRETED IN TERMS OF THE TRUE SUBSTANCE'. (P29)

In Paper 5 he describes a little more: Personality is potential in all creatures who possess a mind endowment ranging from the minimum of self-consciousness to the maximum of God-consciousness. But mind endowment alone is not personality, neither is spirit nor physical energy. Personality is that quality and value in cosmic reality which is EXCLUSIVELY BESTOWED BY GOD THE FATHER upon these living systems of the associated and co-ordinated energies of matter, mind, and spirit. Neither is personality a progressive achievement. Personality may be material or spiritual, but there either is personality or there is no personality. The other-than personal never attains the level of the personal except by the direct act of the Paradise Father. (P 70)

So personality is bestowed by God the Father, and it may be material or spiritual. The material self is endowed with material personality which is temporarily ours for use this life in the flesh, for he goes on to say:

Capacity for divine personality is inherent in the prepersonal Adjuster; capacity for human personality is potential in the cosmic-mind endowment of the human being. But the experiential personality of mortal man is NOT OBSERVABLE AS AN ACTIVE AND FUNCTIONAL REALITY until after the material life vehicle of the mortal creature has been touched by the liberating divinity of the Universal Father, being thus launched upon the seas of experience as a self-conscious and a (relatively) self-determinative and self-creative personality. The material self is truly and unqualifiedly personal. The material self has personality and identity, TEMPORAL IDENTITY; the prepersonal spirit Adjuster also has identity, eternal identity. This material personality and this spirit prepersonality are capable of so uniting their creative attributes as to bring into existence the SURVIVING IDENTITY OF THE IMMORTAL SOUL. (P71)

The time-space image-shadow called human personality is made possible by the pattern arrangement of our material forms. But it is not observable as an active and functional reality after the Thought Adjuster and soul are present. Also, we are told many times that the bestowal of personality is the exclusive domain of God the Father, but does delegates the bestowal of "shadow" personality of the Conjoint Actor? Consider the implication of the following statement, which appear without apparent explanation in Paper 112:

While it would be presumptuous to attempt the definition of personality, it may prove helpful to recount some of the things which are known about personality:

1. Personality is that quality in reality which is bestowed by the Universal Father himself OR BY THE CONJOINT ACTOR, ACTING FOR THE FATHER. (1225)

Ordinarily we regard the Conjoint Actor as the bestower of mind. How does the Conjoint Actor act for the Father in the bestowal of personality? We are told in Part 1 (pg 140:4) that he reacts to both material and spiritual realities, and ministry to beings such as ourselves (who represent a union of both the material and spiritual phases of creation) is his exclusive domain. Does he bestow material (temporal) personality on material minded creatures? The material aspect of creature mind can only respond to material gravity circuit, as explained by a Divine Counselor in Paper 9 (pg. 104:3) , but if we focus our attention on one short paragraph in Paper 8, we will see that he had already called attention to a primary flaw in our view of reality and suggested how we might try to understand the nature and work of God of Action.

BUT MATERIAL CREATURES WHO TEND TOWARDS THE ERROR OF VIEWING MATTER AS BASIC REALITY AND MIND, TOGETHER WITH SPIRIT, AS POSTULATES ROOTED IN MATTER, would better comprehend the Third Source and Center if he were called the Infinite Reality, the UNIVERSAL ORGANIZER, or the PERSONALITY CO-ORDINATOR. (P92)

He describes the "error" but is it the root of THE error? Matter is not basic reality, and mind and spirit are not rooted in matter. Perhaps we would do better to think of them as temporarily "housed" or "encircuited in matter—a sort of complementary "shadow" composed by the Conjoint Actor in his role as Universal Organizer. As Personality Co-ordinator, the Conjoint Actor awaits the advance preparation of the Creator son and Creative Spirit who "duplicate certain Havona patterns of personality and mind in their material creation. (It's somewhat important to the entire discussion for you to be aware that in the Foreword we are told: Pattern is pattern and remains pattern; only copies are multiplied"... "In contrast to the aspect of the "total," pattern discloses the "individual" aspect of energy and personality.") (Pg.10) We are given some interesting information about the advance preparation of the Creator Son and Creative Spirit in Papers 4 and 3.

A Creator Son uses the creatures of Havona as personality-pattern possibilities for his own mortal children and spirit beings.... (P162)

On the worlds of Havona the Spirit and the Daughters of the Spirit find the mind patterns for all their groups of spiritual and material intelligences...(P162)

...mind of the human order is a bestowal of the Daughters of the Conjoint Actor, the Divine Ministers of the evolving universes. (P45)

Havona is the home of the PATTERN PERSONALITY OF EVERY MORTAL TYPE and the home of all superhuman personalities of mortal association who are not native to the creations of time. (P162)

Now we can take a fresh look at two statements in Paper 112 which round out the picture of the material stage for the enactment of the human part of the drama unfolding in the seven superuniverses.

Human beings possess identity ONLY IN THE MATERIAL SENSE. Such qualities of the self are expressed by the material mind as it functions in the energy system of the intellect. When it is said that man has identity, it is recognized that he is in possession of a mind circuit which has been placed in subordination to the acts and choosing of the will of the human personality. But this is a MATERIAL AND PURELY TEMPORARY manifestation, just as the human embryo is a transient parasitic stage of human life. Human beings, from a cosmic perspective, are born, live, and die in a relative instant of time; THEY ARE NOT ENDURING. But mortal personality, through its own choosing, possesses the power of TRANSFERING ITS SEAT OF IDENTITY from the passing material-intellect system to the higher morontia-soul system which, in association with the Thought Adjuster, is created as a new VEHICLE for personality manifestation. (P1232-1233)

At death the FUNCTIONAL identity associated with the human personality is disrupted through the cessation of vital motion. Human personality, while transcending its constituent parts, is dependent on them for functional identity. The stoppage of life destroys the physical brain PATTERNS for mind endowment, and the disruption of mind terminates mortal consciousness. The consciousness of that creature cannot subsequently reappear until a cosmic situation has been arranged which will permit the same human personality again to function in relationship with living energy. (P1234)

The body, then, is merely a temporary functional vehicle with a unique neural pattern. Once activated with the spark of life, it becomes a mechanism for the functioning of the mind and personality circuits. The morontia-soul system is also a vehicle for personality manifestation, and we are supposed to transfer our seat of identity to this soul. The soul is what is observable to the spirit beings as an

active and functional reality. A Mighty Messenger, a one-time mortal like ourselves, made this so clear when he said:

On a material world you think of a body as having a spirit, but WE REGARD THE SPIRIT AS HAVING A BODY. The material eyes are truly the windows of the spirit-born soul. The spirit is the architect, the mind is the builder, the body is the material building. (P483-484)

But what is the soul? Do we really know? From the material viewpoint it's "something" we created in partnership with the Thought Adjuster. The book tells us this repeatedly. We were only about five years old at the time and probably don't remember too much about it. Nevertheless, from the Paradise viewpoint there must be something additional involved in the "birth" of a soul. First a Mighty Messenger tells us, "The great Supreme is the cosmic oversoul of the grand universe. In him the qualities and quantities of the cosmos do find their reflection..." (P1285) A few pages later he tells us this:

The act of the creature's choosing to do the will of the Creator is a cosmic value and has a universe meaning which is immediately reacted to by some unrevealed but ubiquitous force of co-ordination, PROBABLY the functioning of the ever-enlarging action of the Supreme Being. The morontia soul of an evolving mortal is REALLY the SON OF THE ADJUSTER ACTION of the Universal Father and the CHILD OF THE COSMIC REACTION OF THE SUPREME BEING, THE UNIVERSAL MOTHER. The MOTHER INFLUENCE DOMINATES THE HUMAN PERSONALITY THROUGHOUT THE LOCAL UNIVERSE CHILDHOOD of the growing soul. (P1288)

Consider the implication of this remark—and add to it the Divine Counselor's word that we are not observable as an active and functional reality until "after" the appearance of the Thought Adjuster and the soul.

Could it be that the soul is a fragment of the Supreme as the Adjuster is a fragment of the Father? I have to ask—because ACIM urges to remember who we are, saying that we forgot, but not to fear, because the Holy Spirit remembers for us until we awaken from our dream.

Mighty Messengers must be granted more freedom than others in the revelation of truth to mortals. Four times other revelators use a familiar quote from the Scripture with reference to the Universal Father—the one that says:

"In Him we live and move and have our being" (P35) (See also P29-139-105)

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There is no cause to question it, since we know the primal father is the source of all that is. But the Mighty Messenger uses the same quote in reference to the Supreme, creating a big shift in perception. He tells us:

The Supreme Being did not create man, but man was LITERALLY created out of, his very life was derived from, the potentiality of the Supreme. Nor does he evolve man; yet is the Supreme himself the very essence of evolution. From the finite standpoint, WE ACTUALLY LIVE, MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING WITHIN THE IMMANENCE OF THE SUPREME. (P1283)

Are we too focused on our individuality to fully welcome the role of the Supreme in the evolution of the worlds of time and space? ACIM frequently makes reference to God's Son (capitalized) in a collective sense which clearly distinguished it from "God's son" (not capitalized), which is the style used to refer to individual mortals. Since it tells us we're really "one," a Urantia Book student might easily infer that "God's Son" (capitalized) probably refers to the evolving Supreme

So ACIM tells us to "remember who we are" and a Mighty Messenger tells us that we are the children of the Supreme. A throughout study of The Urantia Book alone provides sufficient ground for us to infer that, collectively speaking, in reality we "are" the Supreme—but not our bodies or our temporary identity, because we've already learned that these do not survive mortal death. We have learned that the Father is self-realizing in the worlds of time and space by sending a fragment of himself to dwell within us after contact has been made by the sixth and seventh adjutant mind spirits. The soul repercussion of this act is a child of the evolving Supreme in whom we actually live, move, and have our being. And we are told about the overcontrol of Supremacy.

Still quoting from a Mighty Messenger, the next two references from the paper on "Energy—Mind and Matter" are thought provoking and have left many readers puzzled as to their possible meaning. These may or may not have to do with the overcontrol of the Supreme, but they are definitely clues of some sort.:

Mind is always creative. The MIND ENDOWMENT of an individual animal, mortal, morontian, spirit ascender, or finality attainer is ALWAYS COMPETENT TO PRODUCE A SUITABLE AND SEVICEABLE BODY FOR THE LIVING CREATURE IDENTITY. But the presence phenomenon of a personality or the PATTERN of an identity, as such, is not a manifestation of energy, either physical, mindal, or spiritual. The personality form is the "pattern" aspect of a living being; it connotes the "arrange-

ment" of energies, and this, plus life and motion, is the "mechanism" of creature existence. (P483)

And from there on out through the realms of time and space, wherever a divine spirit reality is present, whenever a real spirit-mind is functioning, there always tends to be produced a material or physical counterpart of that spirit reality. The spirit is the creative reality; the physical counterpart is the time-space reflection of the spirit reality, the physical repercussion of the creative action of spirit-mind. (P484)

At least we have a little more information regarding the source of the mechanism of creature existence. The next three references explain the limitation of this mechanism and something about the overcontrol of Supremacy.

Mechanisms produced by higher minds function to liberate their creative sources but to some degree unvaryingly LIMIT the action of all subordinate intelligences. To the creatures of the universes this limitation becomes apparent as the mechanism of the universes. MAN DOES NOT HAVE UNFRETTED WILL; THERE ARE LIMITS TO HIS RANGE OF CHOICE, but within the radius of this choice his will is relatively sovereign. The life mechanism of the mortal personality, the human body, is the PRODUCT OF SUPERMORTAL CREATIVE DESIGN; therefore IT CAN NEVER BE CONTROLLED BY MAN HIMSELF. Only when ascending man, in liaison with the fused Adjuster, self-creates the mechanism for personalityexpression, will he achieve perfected control thereof. The grand universe is mechanism as well as organism, mechanical and living—a living mechanism ACTIVATED by a Supreme Mind, CO-ORDINATING with a Supreme Spirit, and FINDING EXPRESSION ON MAXIMUM LEVELS OF POWER AND PERSONALITY UNIFICATION AS THE SUPREME BEING. But to deny the mechanism of the finite creation is to deny fact and to disregard reality. (P1303)

THE PRIMAL FATHER IS EVEN NOW — AS ALWAYS — self-realizing of an ever-expanding arena of TIME-SPACE, and of time-space-transcended, meanings, an arena of changing relationships wherein energy-matter is being progressively SUBJECTED TO THE OVERCONTROL OF LIVING AND DIVINE SPIRIT through the experiential striving of living and personal mind. (P480)

We do not find the OVERCONTROL OF SUPREMACY to be wholly predictable. Furthermore, this unpredictability appears to be characterized by a certain developmental incompleteness, undoubtedly an earmark of

the incompleteness of the Supreme and of the incompleteness of finite reaction to the Paradise Trinity. The mortal mind can immediately think of a thousand and one things—catastrophic physical events, appalling accidents, horrific disasters, painful illnesses, and world-wide scourges—and ask whether such visitations are correlated in the unknown maneuvering of this probable **FUNCTIONING OF THE SUPREME BEING**. Frankly, we do not know; we are not really sure. But we do observe that, as time passes, all these difficult and more or less mysterious situations always work out for the welfare and progress of the universes. It may be that the circumstances of existence and the inexplicable vicissitudes of living are all **INTERWOVEN** into a meaningful pattern of high value by the function of the Supreme and the overcontrol of the Trinity. (P115)

Could it be that the Supreme is orchestrating this growing sense of urgency among many readers that it is time for us to begin manifesting the unifying nature of Supremacy in our world-wide fellowship? But we can not effectively do this unless we manage to transfer our seat of identity to the higher morontia-soul system. Our material selves are not capable of discerning spiritual reality, as pointed out in the next three references:

It is exceedingly difficult for the meagerly spiritualized, material mind of mortal man to experience **MARKED** consciousness of the spirit activities of such divine entities as the Paradise Adjusters. As the **SOUL** of joint mind and Adjuster creation becomes increasingly existent, there also evolves a new phase of soul consciousness which is **CAPABLE OF EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE**, and of recognizing the spirit leadings and other supermaterial activities, of the Mystery Monitors. (P65)

Religious experience, being essentially spiritual, **CAN NEVER BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD BY THE MATERIAL MIND...** The difficulties and paradoxes of religion are inherent in the fact that the realities of religion are **UTTERLY BEYOND THE MORTAL CAPACITY** for intellectual comprehension. (P69)

KNOWLEDGE is the sphere of the **MATERIAL** or fact-discerning mind. **TRUTH** is the domain of the spiritually endowed intellect that is conscious of knowing God. Knowledge is demonstrable; truth is experienced. **KNOWLEDGE** is a possession of the mind; **TRUTH** an experience of the soul, the progressing self. Knowledge is a function of the **NONSPIRITUAL** level; truth is a phase of the mind-spirit level of the universes. (P1435)

As you may now understand, it never has been our

material selves who were comprehending the spiritual truths associated with the factual information we've been storing in our brains, but it was truly important to get it recorded there. Only in recent time has science discovered that every experience we have ever had, along with any emotional response connected with the experience, is indelibly recorded on the brain. This would include all spiritual experiences as well, even though, as we just read, these are actually experiences of the soul. These accumulated records are scanned and the information used as a basis for making decisions in the present. The joy emotion associated with gradually accumulated spiritual recording becomes an increasingly attractive choice stimulus to the material creature who naturally seeks pleasure over pain. The indwelling Adjuster can then help us remember the joy at each moment of choice. The midways explained it this way:

UNLESS a divine lover lived in man, he could not unselfishly and spiritually love. **UNLESS** an interpreter lived in the mind, man could not truly realize the unity of the universe. **UNLESS** an evaluator dwelt with man, he could not possibly appraise moral values and recognize spiritual meanings. (P2094)

A Melchizedek solicits our cooperation with a practical logic our mortal minds can understand:

But mortal mind without immortal spirit cannot survive. The mind of man is mortal; only the bestowed spirit is immortal. Survival is dependent on spiritualization by the ministry of the Adjuster—on the birth and evolution of the immortal **SOUL**; at least, there must not have developed an antagonism towards the Adjuster's mission of effecting the spiritual transformation of the material mind. (P565)

The choosing power of the material personality should not be understated, but as we grow consciously aware that it is actually our soul-selves, not our material selves, who are capable of recognizing the leading of our Thought Adjuster, it makes sense to consciously shift the focus of our identity to our soul-selves. You may ask, "How can we do this?" The Urantia Book tells us we **CAN**: **ACIM** tells us **HOW!** It may be the only way we can truly demonstrate our sincerity when we say: "It is my will that your will be done." Without this focus, growth is likely to be spontaneous and wholly haphazard rather than controlled, directed, and constructive. The Urantia Book provides us with the skeleton concept, which is basically this:

...Such a spirit dominance of the material mind is conditioned upon two experiences: **THIS MIND MUST HAVE EVOLVED** through the ministry of the **SEVEN** adjutant mind-spirits, and the material (personal) self must choose

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to co-operate with the indwelling Adjuster in CREATING and FOSTERING the morontia self, the evolutionary and potentially immortal SOUL (P1216)

Having thus provided for the growth of the immortal soul and having liberated man's INNER SELF from the fetters of absolute dependence on antecedent causation, the Father stands aside... it remains for man himself to WILL the creation or to INHIBIT the creation of this surviving and eternal self which is his for the choosing... (P71)

...By and with the consent of your will, the Adjuster has the power to SUBJECT the creature trends of the material mind to the transforming actions of the motivation and purposes of the emerging SOUL. (P1191)

ACIM (A Course in Miracles) picks up where The Urantia book left off.

We know our word is classed as semibarbaric on the evolutionary scale. ACIM asks us to become instruments of peace and tells us how to let the Holy Spirit use our physical presence as a communication tool to turn all forms of fear into love. A Solitary Messenger encouraged us to do this, too, when he said:

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? (P1220)

The first volume of ACIM, the Text, has an unusual introduction which says, in part: "This is a course in miracles. It is a required course. Only the time you take it is voluntary. Free will does not mean that you can establish the curriculum. It means only that you can elect what you want to take at a given time. The course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance..."

It could be rightly called a course in how to respond to the leading of our Thought Adjusters who long to bring about our spiritual transformation. As we learned from The Urantia Book earlier in this discussion, material creatures tend toward the error of viewing matter as basic reality and mind, together with spirit, as postulates rooted in matter. As long as this fundamental error in perception persists in our mind we will not be able to transcend our animal

response to the material gravity circuit. Any attempt to unified Supremacy will be doomed to failure, because it is a spirit-dominated realm.

Jesus understood 2000 years ago that it would not be easy for believers to suddenly transfer their seat of identity from the material self to the soul. Otherwise he would not have said:

Forewarn all believers regarding the fringe of conflict which must be traversed by all who pass from the LIFE as it is lived in THE FLESH to the HIGHER LIFE as it is lived in the SPIRIT. To those who live quite wholly within either realm, there is little conflict or confusion, but all are doomed to experience more or less uncertainty during the times of transition between the two levels of living. (P1766)

He's been a patient Master, but today he says we're running out of time, so he sent us a course to tell us how it can be done. To mainline Christianity "running out of time" suggests that the catastrophic events foretold in the Scriptures are just around the corner. Students of The Urantia Book might infer that we're about to embark on a new age—the first stage of light and life—and most of us fondly wish to make a significant contribution toward that end. But we know there are conditions which must first be met before this can happen, and one of those conditions—the end of the rebellion—requires our direct participation, as we are told in Paper 35:

In the event of rebellion on a system headquarters, a new sovereign is usually installed within a comparatively short time, BUT NOT SO ON THE INDIVIDUAL PLANET. THEY ARE THE COMPONENT UNITS OF THE MATERIAL CREATION, AND CREATURE FREE WILL IS A FACTOR IN THE FINAL ADJUDICATION OF ALL SUCH PROBLEMS. Successor Planetary Princes are designated for isolated worlds, planets whose princes of authority may have gone astray, but they DO NOT ASSUME ACTIVE RULERSHIP of such worlds until the results of insurrection are partially overcome and removed by the remedial measures adopted by the Melchizedeks and other ministering personalities. (P394)

ACIM says that it is time to correct an "ancient" misperception. It tells us what it is and teaches us how to become the kind of miracle workers it will take to correct it.

The Urantia Book tells us our enduring reality is that we are fragments of the Father and possibly a living cells of the Supreme Being. True we have a material form, with a material mind and a material personality, but "Forms are valueless when lesson are learned. No chick may be

had without the shell, and no shell is of any worth after the chick is hatched.” Once a certain phase of soul consciousness—awareness of our true reality—is reached, we no longer have to “live face to face with the incessant clamor of an inescapable self for recognition and honor”(P51) We’re able then to forsake the self-life and dynamically choose the divine life instead.

Perhaps we might infer that “forsake the self-life” means we must deny its natural instincts. Not so. Apparently the material creation, including the body, as always been quite perfect to fulfill the purpose for which it was created. The misperception, we are told, is that the material or ego mind has been conditioned to believe that they—and other ego minds—are separate entities apart from God. Remember that Lucifer challenged the reality of God, saying it was just a hoax designed to keep us in line and prevent us from enjoying the freedom we are entitled to. Then Caligastia sided with him, and in a very short time our word reverted to primitive ways. Cooperation lost to out to competition, and today we’re still caught up on trying to control or outdo one another, miserably preoccupied with prejudice, hate, fears, resentments, revenge and bigotry. This is the self-life we must forsake—the ego mind that thinks it’s separate. We cannot attack another without attacking ourselves. Bodies are material and nonspiritual—only a means to an end—true relationship acknowledges our spiritual oneness and are therefore ends in themselves.

ACIM tells us that we can first let the Holy Spirit teach us that we’re the “chick” not the “shell” and from there we can be much-needed communication devices to help awaken all our brothers from the illusion of separateness kept alive by an ancient misperception. For all who are willing to participate in healing the separation, he promises the same thing a Melchizedek so poetically described in Paper 101 on “The Real Nature of Religion.”

Now, rather, are the sons of God enlisted together in fighting the battle of reality’s triumph over the partial shadows of existence. At last all creatures become conscious of the fact that God and all the divine hosts of a well-nigh limitless universe are on their side in the supernal struggle to attain eternity of life and divinity of status. Such faith-liberated sons have certainly enlisted in the struggles of time on the side of the supreme forces and divine personalities of eternity; even the stars in their courses are now doing battle for them; at last they gaze upon the universe from within, from God’s viewpoint, and all is transformed from the uncertainties of material isolation to the sureties of eternal spiritual progression. Even time itself becomes but the shadow of eternity cast by Paradise realities upon the moving panoply of space. (Paper 101 1117:4)

MYSTERY LIFE by Jim Cleveland

The mystery of life comes round again
with every rising sun
Miracle comes in blinding light
that shines on every one.

The mystery grows as days grow long
and age it creeps upon
and clarity fades in compromises
forced on every one.

To cut to truth is such a task
when money makes its mark
upon the minds of mortal man
and values fall apart.

The mystery of life encircles all
who wonder how to be
to find the light from deep insight
truth as great decree

The mystery slips into the night
As dark as what we see
in this short life, but one day we will
learn God’s mystery

For night it always turns to day
with time the means of change
and we will receive the love one day
exactly as we gave.

We’ll know the mystery for what it was,
a stepping stone to grace.
When we know that all the love we give
reserves our heavenly place.

Mother Teresa.....

Some of her famous sayings.....

Intense love does not measure; it just gives.

Little things are indeed little, but to be faithful in
little things is a great thing.

Nakedness is not only for a piece of clothing;
nakedness is lack of human dignity, and also that
beautiful virtue of purity, and lack of that respect
for each other.

A COLLECTION OF CELESTIAL TEACHERS: **Lessons on Spiritual Ascension**

VERONICA - Volcano, Hawaii; Lesson #13 FOUR PHASES OF THE CORRECTING TIME

Dear friends, Your private and personal expressions of appreciation are well received, and I thank you for your willingness and openness. As always, my deep concern is for your continued development and increased understanding.

There are multiple phases that comprise the correction event now unfolding on Urantia, and your conception of the initial four phases will enlarge your vision of the essential role you must perform.

The first of these stages regards the manifold deployment of personal and group teachers that have volunteered their loving service and who are involved in the transformation preparation of mortals in ways that are both obvious and concealed to you. Their presence is now acknowledged to some and unceasingly becoming evident to others.

The task they have embarked upon is a segment of what some of your associates call the Teaching Mission, and this involves the regeneration of spiritual values on individual levels.

This second phase is exceedingly significant and of great consequence to subsequent stages of transformation that will eventualize on your planet. All my previous and future lessons will give emphasis to this indispensable and profound shift of perception to enhance your inner sense of right direction.

This reprogramming of unconscious personal beliefs that block fuller awareness of your potential is vital to transition into Phase Three which involves a massive and collective change in basic assumptions. It will involve vast popu-

lations and bring about an unprecedented speed of conversion that is inconceivable to you now. There will be a major shift in the interpretation of reality and an assimilation of spiritual and intellectual knowing that will enable a commitment to a shared vision by communal methods. You will be the progenitors that enable this stage of our assignment to be actualized, and it will be after this segment of progression that the expertise of the Melchizedeks will be employed to bring about the fullest development of man's highest powers.

This fourth phase of transformation will impart profound wisdom that will overcome complex problems of uncertainty and usher the collective consciousness on a rapid track towards light and life.

There are many more stages to this vast undertaking; however, these phases of progression have been conveyed to place emphasis on the importance of self-development. These events will not come in orderly succession; and just as individual progression occurs at varied rates, these phases will at times appear concurrently and singularly but will eventually consummate into transcendent meaning.

When Christ Michael assumed mortal form and walked on Urantia, there were many unaware of His presence. Your seemingly small steps will foster the transitions needed to precede each stage of worldwide correction. It gives me tremendous joy to provide you with affectionate influence in devotion to the Father.

It is my desire in this conveyance to help you comprehend the profound importance of your daily struggles towards perfection as it will be fundamental and inherent to the divine plan and our loving progression towards the First Source and Center.

VERONICA - FEB. 7, 1995

MEMORY - TAKE IT WITH YOU.

(TR-Arlene, Volcano, Hawaii - No. 58)

Loyal emissaries of perfected potential,

Realize that your commitment in love has assured your destination of exalted attainment. Your guided course of spirit evolvement is always venturing into unfamiliar spaces of newness; however, the beloved companion of your heart ventures with you in the perfect confidence of Supreme consciousness.

Your ethereal luggage of emerging awareness can be filled with the enduring necessities of spiritual experience. Remember that you are never without the Father's love, so supply your valise of illumination with the sweet surrender of volition and your warm communion of intimacy will dissolve into the ultimate union of oneness with the sacred fiber of supremacy in your soul.

Foregather the cherished qualities of the loving bond of brotherhood that will be the sustenance of your journey of enlightenment. Embrace the potential of each new circumstance as a possible remembrance of love and spirit unfoldment in your eternity.

Remember that only those experiences with the true lightness of His love will accompany you on your eternal traversal through the richness of potential perfection.

Wisely plan your everlasting memory by aligning your evolvement in the beauty of the gentle pursuit of His flawless ultimacy of perfect love.

TOMAS - DEC. 25, 1998

TOYS AND TOOLS OF SPIRIT

(TR-Gerdean, Pittsburgh, PA)

Your investigations into the diversity of divinity, in your sharing this evening of the many, many ways in which our godhead can be understood, is a lot like a parent watching the children open

gifts on Christmas morning. Your delight in discovering all the spiritual tools and toys wrapped in the packaging of the various evolutionary interpretations of divinity, are intriguing to us and we find great delight in your reception of these beliefs as tools and toys for your enjoyment and for your use in expanding your and others' understanding of Our Father.

In some ways it is like learning language, and as each facet of spiritual development has its icons and dialects, its rituals or passages, you can enjoy learning their methods, their mota, and sharing with them their value, their truth. Very much like you experience new personalities, and enjoy what they have to offer, and find value therein, and find them to be a reflection of a greater reality, even as they comport themselves in the ways of the world.

How many gifts you have received already in your life, in this Christmas existence? The gifts which are being bestowed upon you in this yielding time of, as you say 'spiritual renaissance,' in this unfurling of Michael's banner upon Urantia, is a holiday morning indeed. Lots of ribbons. Lots of noise. Lots of jubilation. Lots of "batteries not included." Lots of joy.

Some day your Christmas toys will find their way into the toybox. Some will become broken and discarded. Some will become favorites and put upon a shelf. Some will indeed become a treasure to be handed down to your sons and daughters.

The treasure of passing on your toys and tools is a part of your legacy. Remember then your own roots of manger, your own bed of straw, in and with the Christ child, and allow your gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh to be those gifts of the spirit which can be a living legacy to your children of time and space.

.... I and others have been appreciating your sense of acknowledgement of our allegories, analogies, parables, picturizations. I will point

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out to you that you do the same thing entirely. Indeed, Liana, this evening when you laid out the 21 tarot cards, you were drawing an allegorical picture of an understanding of the cosmos.

It is unfortunate that there are those who fear your creative ministries. These tools and toys of spirituality are enchanting, albeit imperfect, and yet who is to say which of these tools and toys are effectual or ineffectual if they are reaching the people? All of you have an opportunity to develop a ministry in and with tools and toys you find work for you. No one says you have to use the same ones for all eternity! There is infinite variation in these teaching opportunities.

One of the advantages of developing interests, such as you have in interpreting the cards, and as others have in interpreting chakras and the like, is that it enables you to become fluid in your thought processes and courageous in your exposition in your understanding, or AN understanding, of a reality which is expansive, is creative. It whets the appetite.

There are some who have no hunger, no taste, for such. Pass them by. There are many, many ministries. Do you think that the little drummer boy is not valued for the gift he brings? Amahl and the Night Visitors? All of these allegories and fairy tales are retelling the same story.

In the symphony which we have discussed many, times, the drum, of course, does not sound like the piccolo, and the cello does not sound like the xylophone, but are they not each an instrument? And, in that, are they not all the same? It is in the music. It is in the coordination and the respect for the sound and the timing of each other's instrument that allows for the orchestra to play.

If you all remember who the Conductor is and what the music is for, you can bring all of your tools and toys to the theater, to the stage, to the

arena wherein you live your life and perform your ministries, where you enjoy yourself, being yourself, doing what you love to do, to reveal to others how it is that you perceive the Master and/or His universe.

You are rejoicing in sonship, daughtership, and bringing good cheer, offering hope, liberating the captives by your efforts. You have brought gifts on behalf of the Christ child to Urantia. Noel. Noel.

It would seem that we teachers are learning your culture. We are beginning to - or I should say I AM beginning to understand your festivals and holidays. I am attempting to understand you because that way I can love you more, of course, but it also enables me to be a better teacher to you, for you. As you best understand who you are trying to teach, who you are trying to reveal the Father to, you are becoming adept and educated and skilled. You are becoming a better teacher and preacher. You are applying yourself to the subtle and not so subtle nuances of God-consciousness. You have learned how to use the tools and toys which have been given to you as gifts of the spirit.

TENARE

GOD WITHIN

From: Anthony Porzio, Arcata, CA

Greeting to all of you here, gathered this evening, fellow time-travelers. I am your teacher for this time-space. I am Tenare, I am a female, and I have chosen to speak as a teacher this evening because I can sense the need for nurturing and comfort for the souls that have gathered in this room.

Your world has been a very dark place in this universe for what must seem to you as having been a very long time. We are here as teachers for the purpose of bringing awareness of your connection with an orderly universe, that your world has never lost a moment of divine watch-

care and spiritual love.

The problem that exists on your world at this time, as a result of the many years of isolation and quarantine from the rest of the univers, is the lack that has existed here in the ability to perceive, in any substantial way, the heavenly realms, the divine guides, the angelic messengers, and the supernal caregivers that have endeavored, at all times, to guide you into the pleasant harbors of safety and security.

It is in situations such as this, that such an awareness may be cultivated as you focus inwardly now upon your receptor tools and utilize your awareness mechanisms as we speak to you through your sensory perceptions, we are hoping that you will learn to tune into the spirit forces that are with you on a constant and daily basis.

Our work as teachers is no greater than to just help you become more attuned to that which is within you. Hopefully, by hearing with your ears things and sounds that vibrate on a frequency, much like a tuning fork, so that your own instruments may vibrate on the same frequencies as those who exist within you, yet on a divine level of reality.

So please, relax and open up your hearts to the sound vibration-realities of truth, that you may allow the spirit forces within you to resonate. And you may be able to receive the connections that exist above the normal levels of human awareness.

It's very important that you learn how to tune into your inner guidance, that you may practice on a daily basis, or whenever the need for guidance, that you may have access to that which will sustain you through every difficulty that you encounter.

As Brilliant Evening Stars, we do have gifts to give that will help you in this way. We have the

ability to "beam" into your being a form of light energy, something of which you have not been exposed to in your life. The purpose of this energy is to assist you in your transformational growth. That you may progress, each according to your own pace and in collaboration with the God within.

The God within is the God of your soul, the God of your hopes, and effectively, the joy of your experience of spiritual reality. The God within is not only your guide, but also your goal, your destiny as well as your origin, that you may understand what it is that you are doing here on this world, experiencing your human-ness for very specific reasons.

The lessons that you must learn in this realm are essential, not only for your own personal growth, that you may transcend the levels where you are, but also for the experience that you add to the overall Grand Universe, that which you will share ... all that you are and all that you experience is all that you will give. And it will grow and it will be appreciated.

Your experience here on this world is a difficult experience. There is no one who lives on this earth without experiencing, more or less, the same types of growth struggles. Yet, they are in different forms. No one individual's suffering is any greater than another, for all the lessons are the same.

The great danger is in the avoidance of learning the lesson, in seeking to use the energies of the world as a means of delaying or completely avoiding the necessary growth, the necessary struggle, and the necessary achievements that are the Father's will, the First Source and Center of all life itself, whom has ordained and predetermined that you will certainly have your hands full with a daily struggle for and in life.

And as you learn the message behind your pains,

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behind your grief, and your many sufferings, hopefully, you will not dwell upon finding blame and causes for these experiences. But rather, look to them as means of transcending where you are now, For, when you do rise above your anguish, your anxiety, there is a great sense of satisfaction, a personal awareness of achievement and a deeper understanding of life in the universe. Also in all of this, one is brought closer to the innermost and near presence of the highest of all divine realities ... the Father-God within.

FROM ANTHONY: *View and download a few of my modern artworks at www.hardiehouse.org then go to The Word/Micro-blues/VIDEOID. These are 3 of 14 relief sculptures to appear, and the site is at Humboldt State University, Arcata, California. Send me an e-mail message from there, if you like.*

WILL

ONE-ON-ONE SPIRITUAL SERVICE

Sept. 13, 1998 - Tallahassee, FL

It has been some time since we last spoke, although I have continued to monitor your activities, and I am very pleased with each of you. There has been some concern expressed regarding our intermittent communications, and yet I have told you often that ultimately you will be sent out into the world, and each of you will be teachers of others. This is the most effective manner in which our message will be conveyed: oneperson to one person. Discussions and lessons from celestials who are invisible, ethereal, many would say is a product of an overheated imagination and would hardly be taken seriously.

What is noticable is a life well lived, a faith expressed in common, everyday vernacular, selfless service with no expectation of compensation, an overflowing heart, a twinkle in your eye, a smile on your face. This is what I call inspired ministry.

This is not to say that we will not be cheering you on at every step, speaking with you from time to time, reaching out to assist you when possible. But basically, your community will become self-contained in its efforts to spread the good news. We have taught you much and you have a responsibility, therefore, to share that knowledge with your brothers and sisters. But as I think each of you can appreciate, the specific knowledge of cosmological structure, of factual information, will hardly be convincing to your brothers and sisters, especially those who are already convinced of an alternative perspective.

No, this ministry is not about convincing someone that your perspective is correct. This ministry is about touching your brothers and sisters with love. It's so very hard to remember at times, when you chaff at another's misunderstood, misperceived vision of what is required to proceed toward God. A closed mind will never permit you to explain a different scenario; however, there is no mind so closed that selfless service cannot flow love over any barrier between you.

You are cautioned that the knowledge you have gained from the Urantia Book not become a barrier in your ability to bridge all gaps between people through your joyful countenance. You must walk with grace and joy, and spread love when you go, for indeed you will meet many people of many different theological and philosophical persuasions. Your job is not to convert them to your way of thinking, but to communicate with them through heart connections, to become a conduit for the love which is given to you from God, and to do so with faith, and in the end all things will work for the best.

I believe you are ready to accept this challenge, to be able to resist clashing with your brothers and sisters over dogma and ritual, and to see straight through the very essence of your counterparts and know that they too are children of

God. This is your charge; these are your instructions. Now go and be about the Father's business, and know that you are surrounded with love. Shalom.

OLFANA

EVOLVING GODWARD

TR: Susan Kimsey - Half Moon Bay, CA

We can, together, evolve Godward. This is our destiny.

You may feel the mountain rise above you. You start here, in the lowlands, saying to yourselves, "Can I, indeed, scale these heights? Is there, indeed, hope that I can develop the integrity, the stamina, the strength to, indeed, reach the heavens?"

I assure you, you are, indeed, very capable of this journey. We teachers are here to assist you. We have traveled some of this path, and now turn back, and greet you, and say, "Would you like a traveling companion?" This is, indeed, our role. We are traveling companions, as you mount the first inclines of this path. You will be guided by many wonderful, beautiful beings, as you travel heavenward. Our association is the beginning example of this experience.

Let us, just for a moment, please, hold hands. [The group rises, and joins hands in a circle.] Is it not true, that often when travelers begin a journey together, they gather as we do now, holding hands, sharing a sense of commitment, and companionship, and, indeed, an oath of integrity that "We will look out for each other. We will provide support, and, indeed, caretaking of each other in this journey?"

Some of us may know the path upward better than the others, but we can all savor this journey together! So I would ask of you, consider yourselves joined in a path of commitment, exploration, novelty, and spiritual excitement. You begin

the path of enlightenment to your God! Thank your Creator for the opportunity that has been provided to you now. Realize that He has offered you a marvelous, imposing, and yet, spectacular mountain to traverse!

There are many, many paths to God. Throughout the universe, there are multitudinous paths to the Father—but, for your lives, your beings, your soul's growth, God has provided this path to you, if, indeed, you chose it as the one you wish to follow.

So, if you can, create an image for yourself now of this mountain that you stand before. See it with the sun glistening on the high peaks, and granite sides which sparkle and gleam with light. See, above its peaks, the beautiful white clouds which float past it. Imagine the immensity with which it rises from the earth! There is a power in this mountain which you intend to climb. There is strength in this rock. And as you step upon this mountain, you can, indeed, be connected with its strength. It can, indeed, help to sustain you, as you move upward in your path.

Do not fight the mountain, to conquer it. This is not the goal. You are to move—with—the mountain's height. You are to synchronize your movements, balance your body's weight, with the path of the mountain. The mountain is, indeed,—allowing—you to climb it. Imagine it as your inspiration, and your strength!

Now, take this imagery, and hold it within your mind, in a place where you can, indeed, at times, in your own stillness practice, turn to it. And say: "As I sit in repose, content with the Father's Love for me, I will, indeed, take a further step upon my journey back to God. I will imagine myself moving up this mountain, examining the vistas that spread out before me. I will see myself rising, climbing greater heights. At times there will, indeed, be struggles. Perhaps I may feel myself slip. But I know that, number one,

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my companions are watchful for my progress. They care about the quality and safety of my journey. I can turn to them if, indeed, I feel I need help in my struggle up this mountain path. And I, indeed, will be there to help them, if they reach struggles also.”

Secondly, in your meditation, imagine yourself moving step-by-step, peacefully. There is no rush up this mountain. There is no competition. You are to move in a pattern which allows you a sense of comfort and competence. You are to move up this mountain at the pace with which you —choose— to rise.

If you find this imagery helpful, then, indeed, my lesson has been effective. However, I will add that any perception you have of your path to God, whether it is this image of the mountain, or, indeed, a path of flight through the air, or something which you cannot, indeed, connect visual images with—any perception you hold of this movement toward the Father is something I encourage you to nourish within yourselves. Recognize that focusing upon this perception will, indeed, strengthen you, hearten you, allow you appropriate perspective on the choices and decisions which you must make daily, in your lives as earthly mortals.

I would add that, if you choose this imagery, at times, of the mountain trek, you should, indeed, also visualize, along with the beauty of the mountain itself, glimpses of marvelous created beings of the Father, who stand on heights, looking down upon you making your own movement up this mountain, and they are savoring your ascent! They are encouraging your efforts. They are guiding you, and expressing to you choices which you can make, in this path upward, which will, indeed, cause your ascent to become easier.

Look to these guides who decorate this mountain with their beauty, and climb upward where they

wait to greet you with loving, open arms! I thank you for your attention, and cooperation with my imagery.

MELUTIA

FAITH AND THE GOLDEN RULE

Joe & Joan Levine, Malibu, CA - 2-11-95

Friends, it is an honor to be with you in this spiritual oasis, but even more so to recognize your FAITH which reates this very moment. Faith is like fuel, and the more you have, the closer you are to God.

Like other human attributes, faith can be materialized, that is to say the human feeling of superiority of one's faith and/or religion above others. Arrogance IS NOT faith, but is false pride. True faith is quality, quantity, and it leads to quality actions based on the Golden Rule. Your faith has led you to God's will. This very moment is a bright example.

Faith is MAN'S way of knowing God's gift and GOD'S way of delivering that gift. Father can only OFFER, but man must DESIRE and that WILL leads to ACTION. True believers of the Golden Rule lead to spiritual actions bonded by the faith in God's will and the HOPE that other Urantians join in this universal message. Faith comes from within, hope is dependent on others. Faith is spiritual glue.

We Melchizedeks are spiritual beings who occasionally mingle with planetary problems such as Urantia. HELLO, we are here. The adjudication of Lucifer Rebellion is over. The embryonic stage of the beginnings of Light and Life is upon you.

Although Urantians like you who desire to participate are only a few (the light is quite faint), more and more will begin to DESIRE truth, beauty, goodness and love and that will generate to a brighter and brighter light, all the way to

Light and Life.

So now is the beginning, friends. WHAT A MOMENT. Without faith, you would not be here today. Your faith AND courage is admired on high. A faint light is at least on. The switch IS NOT off.

We Melchizedeks ARE HERE to SPIRITUALLY ASSIST you and any other Urantians whose faith is real and seeking to do the will of our Father. The embryonic stage of Light and Life DEMANDS the actions of the Golden Rule to be implemented into ACTIONS -- actions that proceed with FAITH, balanced with wisdom and the will of God. Your faith WILL lead you to peace of mind, but it must be combined with TRUTH, BEAUTY, GOODNESS AND LOVE. Shalom

RATTA

GOD'S GIFT OF HIMSELF

From: SawKing <SawKing@TWLakes.Net>

This morning, many will attend houses of worship, for various reasons, some social, some political, economics and fear will prompt some. And yet, there are many who will really commune with the Father in spirit and truth. The true beauty of this day is a soul-felt sentiment. Allow your spirit to reveal it to you.

On this Sunday morning, I would have you contemplate the awesome fact that the First Source and Center, the Paradise Father, has given you a gift of Himself.

The spirit that indwells you is not an interesting story from the Urantia papers, not some theory that is pleasing, not something from afar and in the future, but a real and present universe fact. Father's loving Fragment within you is yours and yours alone and you are His for eternity, if you so choose. When you truly grasp the living significance of this unbelievable relation-

ship, the human you and the divine you in intimate and loving partnership it is a revelation.

Seek this revelation with all your heart, and it will be yours. It is a moment of pure worship and joy, of indescribable beauty and truth, and a glimpse of true goodness. This morning, I urge you to forget everything but the immensity of the Gift of God within you, for truly, in light of this revelation, all else is totally insignificant.

HAM

EVOLVING, EXPANDING SOULS

1/18/98 - Nashville, TN; TR: Rebecca

Greetings, children, I am Ham and I am happy to have you all get together this evening to hear these humbly proffered words. Tonight, we shall discuss your evolving and expanding souls.

The soul substance, the morontia substance, continually is undergoing a purification process which takes your whole being, your thinking, your bodies responses, from the purely materialistic response pattern to a more and more purely spiritual response pattern. Your soul is expanding into subtler and subtler areas of thinking and body functioning.

Gradually you are moving from inert lifeless darkness to living light. You can feel the light expanding from the heart center throughout and beyond the physical body. Gradually, your thinking is less and less centered on the material world and what is happening in it. Gradually your assurance and calm steadfastness is derived from centering your thinking on the spirit and the spirit realm.

You are all beginning to understand the truth that when seemingly physical catastrophes occur in your lives, like relationships or business etc., that these catastrophes are just a reorganization, a clearing away of the old, so that something new

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and greater can take its place. Have faith my children, you will experience this pattern again and again. When things look the bleakest, if you cling closely to the spirit then something new and better will come to take its place. These small things are sacrificed so that the great things can come in.

As you grow more and more in the spirit, and your soul is more closely identified with the spirit, then no catastrophes in the world can perturb you. This is a true feeling of security that is inexplicable to those less advanced. You, children, all know that you are working with angels. The more you can turn things over to them and trust in them, the calmer more peaceful and more self assured you will become.

Once you have sworn your dedication to serving the Father and the Master's cause on earth, you need have no more fears concerning your physical life. There are greater plans surrounding all these occurrences, all these happenings, than you can comprehend. You see even now, how you are being positioned, each one, in different areas for different purposes.

You each have a great task to do. Be of light heart, let go of the burdens of the world, dedicate yourselves anew each morning to the cause of the spirit, and all else will be added unto you. When the projects that you are working for in the spirit have problems or setbacks, you must know without a doubt that these are part of the Father's plan and have been angelically manipulated.

Realize, children, that all your efforts are multiplied by the work of the seraphim. Realize that when you dedicate your life to this service, that you then have the strength of many people, the strength of ten men if you will, because you are supported and aided and saved from falling by a legion of angels. Little do you understand the powers that are working with you. Let go of your worry, your fears, your anxiety that you won't be

able to do what is asked.

You must remember that you are like the point of an upside down pyramid. You have really very little that you must do. All the rest of this vast pyramid does the rest. You may have a little job to do each day, a little something that you must discharge and you will see, you will witness, how these little efforts are multiplied in the universe.

Be happy and content, find love in your heart each day. Allow the Father to comfort you through your stillness practice, and don't ever get discouraged. Are there any questions at this time?

Q: Are there any techniques we should be aware of that when we are retarding the efforts of our unseen friends and the accomplishments of our goals?

HAM: You cannot retard their efforts. Your only responsibility is your own spiritual growth. You will all learn quickly when to act, when not to act. But all this is fully anticipated by your seraphic helpers and you are all learning the lessons you need to learn right now at this time.

Q: How does God send spiritual life down to earth?

Ham: Everything that is living is spiritual. All life in all forms from grass and plants to animals and on up to human beings, all partake of the spirit. God's love is in every living thing. In every living thing there is truth, beauty, and goodness. The Father has created all these good things, all these beautiful things for his own love to be reflected back to him and as you reflect God's love back to him, you reflect it to all things and you grow to love all living things, all people, and all things beautiful more and more. And this is how you show God that you love him.

ABRAHAM

REPLACING NEGATIVE CHATTER

Woods Cross, Utah - Dec. 2, 1998

From: CalvinMckee@aol.com; TR: Nina

Many individuals believe they have their own personal dark cloud that follows them. With the negative self-talk, this cloud is manifested in a variety of areas of living. Even those spiritually learned and mature do somehow believe they are the recipient of good or bad luck.

The separation from your spiritual roots made man to believe he was a child of the evil one. In this mode of negative thinking, confidence was lost, and efforts were put towards appeasing the Gods.

You can understand at this point in your spiritual education that this is somewhat humorous, and yet, many still believe they need to bargain with Father in order to receive a more easy life, not simplified, but easy.

When one believes they are from the First Source and Center of all there is, they begin to cease with the negative self-talk and focus more so on serving within the Kingdom. A negative inner chatter would only prove to be depleting of confidence and surety that you are indeed Father's beloved child.

This week, I ask that you continue in your exercise of exchanging negative thoughts towards your personal self and abilities, for gratitude to our Father for His loving direction and caretaking He does for us.

Upon recognizing negative energy depleting self-talk, think about Father's watchcare, and His perfectly planned lessons He has for you. Your ability to worship is always energy generating.

QUESTION: Why did you initiate tithing when

Melchizedek was totally trying to help you realize that it wasn't necessary — that God didn't require it —but you persisted on giving a sacrifice, and what has it been ... 4,000 years now, and it still lives on?

ABRAHAM: Understood. I can also understand where this affects you personally, and your compassion for others' well-being. I can say that probably fear was the main motivator for tithing and sacrificing. It began as a bargain with God to allow me to be prosperous, or at least unaffected by adversity.

And yes, you are correct, this does live on to this day. Even the Apostles who worked and lived with Jesus could not be swayed from their belief that He was indeed the Messiah. I suppose my friend and mentor, Machiventa, could not have persuaded me to end a ritual that seemed to be working, if only in my own mind. I suppose I paid for peace of mind. This was my understanding then.

Individuals such as yourself are indeed bringing this topic to the forefront of people's mind, and yet, it does them well to ponder over the thought that they too, may sacrifice and pay - out of fear. Individuals who choose to remain in traditional religions, without reaching for higher understanding, will do as they are told, but I can guarantee you, this subject goes out over the cosmic circuits, and touches individuals who choose to reach for higher realities.

QUESTION: What is the resolution? When is it going to stop, another 4000 years?

ABRAHAM: Not any time soon. (Laughter) As long as people are tradition bound, there will be rules, rules to follow, and hopefully programs such as our Correcting Time will be able to affect change.

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NERO

TOWARD PURIFICATION WITH THE FEW AND THE MIGHTY

TR: Jim Cleveland

Nashville TeaM Conference 1998

I am Nero, a teacher in this mission. And in this beautiful farewell evening, I would like to address you for a moment. You, the few and the mighty. For sometimes I know you consider yourselves small in number and you wonder with some worry of your significance in such an awesome challenge as planetary change.

Perhaps I can add some calm and peaceful insight to this intermittently nagging consideration. Had you been an apostle of our Master, you would hardly know that you, an ordinary man, is helping to bring forth upon the world a brand new religion. For you may consider yourself a fisherman, a man of modest means, a working man, a family man. And would you have the time to help create a new and expanded religion?

And you yourselves daily face all the challenges of a mortal life, and seek to find these times between in which you can contribute. Great work can be accomplished by the few who are spiritually connected to the energy. And who have learned to bring ideas, visions, hopes and dreams to fruition with bold actions. The few can be the mighty. The motivated ... charged ... electrified ... with the energy of the spirits.

How many people does it require to seed the Urantia Book in every country of the world? Surprisingly few. The worldwide web at work has been inspired and co-created with you, for the purpose of bringing this arena into potentially powerful and quickening, exhilarating interaction.

The speed of change will be greatly accelerated

in years ahead. You are the threshold of a beginning. And though you are few, I want you to understand in your hearts that no matter the burgeoning publishing of spiritual ideas, inspirations, and motivations, you have a message — it could be called a marketing niche by the secularists — which no one else has in its pure and simple form.

You have a unique message which many will find to be the kernel, the nucleus, that will unify and center their spiritual growth. These people will range from the mainstream of organized churches to the bold adventurers of the so-called New Age — which often resembles the ancient age revisited.

All of these proliferating movements, in fact, mean that you are not the few. You are a unique band with a special heartening, nucleized message that cuts to the heart as no other movement seems to be doing — this incisive and liberating message of God presence inside. You are attuned to strong and powerful truths through your cosmology text, which provides over-encircling foundation. And a newly dramatized teaching of these concepts which have been ruminating within your minds these many years.

It is time for action. You are taking these actions, you are revealing God inside. You are revealing the art of listening, hearing, and interconnecting with celestials of many personalities and many missions who are flooding ... flooding ... flooding to this sector of the universe for purification. You are part of this purification, beginning, as all other great movements begin inside, inside the hearts, the minds, the souls of each of you.

All great movements emanate from within. Therefore, one goes within to begin personal growth and purification, after which time you will be sponsored and accompanied, side by side, with your celestial friends who move forth in

living service.

There is some impatience that things move too slow, but I ask you to consider with truthful heart if your own purification has been manifested. And if there are not other lessons to learn individually, personally that will make this precious limited mortal time more appropriate. And in this purification comes the preparatory skills and personality balance resembling to the degree of possibility the supreme balance of Christ Michael as Jesus the Son of Man.

You may be few, but you can bring yourself, your personality, into a state of balance that you take greater satisfaction in knowing that you at least resemble and emulate the precious Jesus. While you may not find this perfection in every day of your mortal life, you will find a balance that helps you to glide and not take hard steps. That smoothes your day by day transition into a feeling of blended encircled peace and energy intertwined that will carry you through each day. And you will know restful sleep that truly nurtures and refreshes and invigorates. You as individuals can reach this level of purification that you may go forth as apostles, working in twos, and doing great work.

Do not be impatient. Look in hindsight as a tool to see how far you have come. And you have come far. For your relatively few numbers, we consider you the most dynamic, the most heartfelt, and the most contributing segment of this textual revelation. You were chosen many years ago, most truly as children, because you asked for higher spiritual understanding, and you have been led to learn this cosmology as a curriculum to inspire you to teach universal truths in your daily lives. Many skills, many talents come into the fore and many great works are done by individuals in very small groups working together.

Do not despair of the media. The media is also changing. And the media will change even

more. And do not feel because you are one or because you are few that you must carry this great load of planetary evolvment upon your shoulders. For truly the energies are emanating from each heart of atheist and agnostic, becoming increasingly restless, disillusioned with what they have found to be not true, hungry for a deeper depth of understanding. And on every point of light on Urantia, from the monasteries, to the churches, to the synagogues, we work with individuals, bringing forth from within, the indwelling spirit, those concepts and inspirations that are needed.

This is a massive planetary awakening. And the mission is even more massive to your points of view when considered from a local universe context. For Nebadon virtually vibrates with excitement of epochal purification of planets, of worlds and this work is so incredibly exciting that I wish you could see it from our perspective.

However, your perspectives are what you must refine now. This is your opportunity for life in the flesh and experiential learning, as has been said. It could not be obtained in any other way. Patience, of course, is required. Patience ... patience. For this time of unfoldment is not only an exercise in developing your individual purities, your individual strength of will that will make you as an individual a forceful warrior for love and peace. It is also an exercise in cooperation, for while the individual must realize self-potential, and a level of self-reliance within the context of grace, you must learn to work with others who have differing, often frustrating views, as you have learned in the trials of your various groups.

It is all about learning and growing and that is what is going on. It is all about evolution and that is what is going on. And so as you learn the strength of the one, the strength of the small groups, the strength of the many, you must also learn that cooperation in enterprises of this

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magnitude require even more. They require intergenerational cooperation, ordinarily not done by the father and mothers of today, but the continuation and completion of this great purification and reclamation must be done by your children and your grandchildren. And we encourage you to take yet another responsibility in training them well. Training them to carry on. Through the generations, an amazing story will unfold on this very special planet.

And always know and always understand that the doomsayers, apocalyptic prophets, my friends, from my perspective as a teacher in this mission, I say to you that these catastrophes will not bring this world to ruin. As you grow in spirit, you will realize how preposterous this idea is. The Father, I do not believe, is inclined to destroy a perfectly good planet. Or to disallow his hungry, crying, suffering children, whose pleas for help have touched the Father and touched all in Nebadon and many beyond Nebadon.

These cries of suffering are validation that you have paid heavy dues; you have suffered already. You are working for spiritual peace, you are asking, you will receive, indeed are receiving incremental openings of energy, which allow incremental openings of your perception of truth, appreciation of beauty, desire to live in goodness. These energy openings can cause disruptive and nonsensical actions which you would consider marks of insanity.

Indeed, if you look around, while you also have trained yourselves to look at the positive examples of the Correcting Time, you will see many weird aberrations of people who seem to, as you say, have become very weirded out. I say to you, you will be called upon to help many of these people regain their balance, regain their center, for they are floundering without the nucleus that holds the power structure together. Without this anchoring heart of goodness, with-

out the realization of the one God inside, many will fall to the various vices and self-indulgences and frustrations that lead to violence and conflict.

These are your brothers and sisters. Help them to find this center within. This center within is nucleus from which all grows. It is the flowering blossom of beauty. Nature encompasses lessons in every being, in every action, in every changing season. Much can be learned from an acorn. From a seed. From a cat. Much can be learned from the earth, and the earth itself combined with the stillness can become a powerfully energizing influence. Find these pockets of energy in the stillness. Keep your tank filled because you never know what tomorrow may bring. What opportunity to be of service.

And if you have been a slackard in energizing your spiritual self, you will often not be prepared to confront the one in suffering, the one who attacks you, the pitiful beggar in the street. The one whose eyes ask you for compassion and help as you walk on by.

It is the stillness that energizes. This is the place to go for powerful illuminating energies, incremental additional elements of truth and beauty and goodness to fill and permeate your soul. And as you are filled to overflowing, as your purification reaches levels for which you can feel a peaceful satisfaction, then you will be called upon for service which relates directly to your talents and skills.

I know this is perhaps a compilation of much you have heard before. But in the rearranging of information and the various combinings, I pray that my lesson and my insights and perspectives have been helpful to you. And that you will take them for your consideration into your moral and spiritual fabric, and I will be pleased and gratified if you make this part of you.

Thank you for listening. I am overjoyed to have the opportunity to work with the courageous mortals of Urantia. A special place. For which I volunteered and was genuinely excited upon receiving this assignment. For of all places in Nebadon, this is where we would want to be. And we would hope that you are happy to be here too. Peace to all of you and good night.

ABRAHAM

THE SWIM OF MORTAL LIVING

Woods Cross, Utah - Dec. 13, 1998

It is perfectly acceptable to stand on the beach of mortal living, slowly allowing life's experiences to roll up over your feet. It is not however experiencing the actual participation in fully experiencing all life has to offer. Yes, swimming can bring about taking water in and choking, yes, fatigue, and fear may play a part, but one does not build upon those spiritual muscles without exercising in the swim of mortal living.

It is acceptable to stand upon the shore. At one point or another you will have opportunity to dive in—in this life or the next. Urantia however, is seeing an age where standing on the shore is not enough. Feeling fearful at drowning or injury is not bringing fulfillment. To step in deeper into the living waters is a mystery, yes, and yet, it builds confidence, intrigues the mind, exercises those spiritual muscles, and opens up a new world of learning.

You, my friends, are those who find the beach boring and at times indulge in the ocean. How beautiful this is to me having lived a life in the flesh. Our focus for this week is to show your fellows by living example how wonderful the water can be, how mysterious and refreshing you find it. Allow the Master to have expression through you, and do not wonder why your fellows seek you out. My friends—enjoy. Until next week, shalom.

ABRAHAM

RELY UPON THE SUSTAINER

Woods Cross, Utah -- Dec. 20, 1998

Many mortals are all too ready to jump into life's experiences and travel through them quickly in whatever manner they would choose. There are those who would choose the guidance of Father and find that their lessons are more safe and lasting. Always in the swim of life, however, there is need to stop and just be—just float with the waves, just take a moment to orient the muscles towards the eternal goal.

How difficult it is to trust while in the mortal body that Father and His universe Sons are there to hold you safely while you catch your breath, while you orient yourself towards the goal, while you release your every day frustrations and take in energy. This is a season for Michael's birth celebration into the world and a wonderful time for all to remember how he sustains you.

MICHAEL - A Christmas Message

I AM here. I am among you. I am your Sustainer, Brother, Father—Michael. How I do receive joy when my beloved children allow me my place in sustaining them. How touched am I to see the trust my children still have in me.

I know, as you know, the world is harsh and can seek to remove your light. I can understand the hope that has been lost over these many years. I also ache and weep for those who would not have me or my Father.

I have been commissioned to upgrade and enlighten the mortal minds of this world. My work now is no less important as it was two thousand years ago. In this age though, my work is more difficult, for there are so many children who have learned to mistrust or disbelieve or to turn away from unseen blessings in favor of false

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material securities. I have rallied my forces — the trumpets have sounded. I have rolled up my sleeves ready to be about the Father's business. This Correcting Time is occurring.

There are major changes made every day. Albeit unknown to you, they do happen. Events that appear to be negative are certainly for the greater healing of the planet — of the world's people. I do ask that those who serve in this mission allow me to provide buoyancy. It is imperative that I am relied upon to sustain you in the waters of mortal living. As you trust, I become more of a reality on this world. As you muster the courage to go through the living waters will you find me there, as if I had always been there.

My children work diligently and need at times rest and to trust that I will provide sustenance for them. My contact with you is becoming more casual and unextraordinary as you find faith and trust. A relationship with me is not a chosen seat to my left or my right; not an infrequent consultation; not wishful thinking; not a bargaining session—no.

But contact with me is relief from emotional strain; rest for the mind and body; comfort to the soul; strength to the character; clarity of the mind; confidence in your decisions and actions; courage - should fear strike; energy to live and serve; knowledge on how to serve.

These wonderful things are yours should you choose not to stumble over me; should you choose not to struggle in the current of rough waters; should you allow my arms to give you rest.

I am here at your feet as I was with my apostles of old. I would find it my honor to provide the cleansing and the upliftment of your spiritual journey. I am your Brother - Father - Sustainer. I give my love. Carry on.

A NATIVE AMERICAN PRAYER

by Oriah Mountain Dreamer

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living
I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to
dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if
you will risk looking like a fool for love,
for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your
moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of
your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's
betrayals or have become shriveled and closed from fear of
further pain!

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own,
without moving to hide it or fade it or fix it. I want to
know if you can be with joy, mine or your own, if you can
dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips
of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be
careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of
being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true,
I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to
yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not
betray your own soul.

I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be
trustworthy. I want to know if you can see beauty even
when it is not pretty every day, and if you can source your
life from God's presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and
mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the
silver of the full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much
money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the
night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone,
and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't interest me who you are, how you came to be
here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the
fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you
have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the
inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can
be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company
you keep in the empty moments.

ASK GOD

by Jim Cleveland

I asked God for a pot of gold and he sent me a rainbow
I asked for someone to hold and he sent me you.
I asked God for the peace that comes from ultimate understanding.
He told me this will all come forth in brilliance when we're standing
as souls awash in spirit light that grew from deep within
and found expression in every day and in each day we still begin
to find our way ascending ever upon the splendid stairs
that carry our soul in lighted step far beyond our mortal cares.

I asked God for a high life and he showed me how to grow.
I asked for the blessed sigh that comes with spirit glow.
He told me to go inside to find the light that loves me so
that lights our lives and centers life in eternal, loving snow.
that ascension paths are bathed in prayer and service to our fellows
and our lives will grow in flaming love burning brighter from our bellows.

I asked God to show the way and I would do my

best
but sometimes forgot and lost my way in this laborious human quest
Distractions soared and I forgot to ask for fruits so freely shared
from God above who answers prayers through brothers and sisters who care
And never upon a silver platter does our growth to spirit occur
but only with the effort made to learn this blissful allure
in quietness, stillness time with God to worship and pray in faith
as one who does his best each day to honor what Father has made.

(Chorus)

Ask God.
Just ask God in the morning to light this day
Ask the Father to guide the lost along the way.
And watch over the children here at play
And the lonely ones who think they have no say.
Ask God
to help us find the service that makes a better day
and the Father's living light that shows the way
It will come if we will gently go and pray
in the stillness stream where spirits smile and play.
Ask God. There is no better way.

MEANING OF THE TAO

From: ejlight@earthlink.net (E. J.)

“Those who wish to embody the Tao should embrace all things.

To embrace all things means first that one holds no anger or resistance toward any idea or thing, living or dead, formed or formless. Acceptance is the very essence of the Tao.

To embrace all things means also that one rids oneself of any concept of separation: male and female, self and other, life and death. Division is

contrary to the nature of the Tao.

Foregoing antagonism and separation, one enters into the harmonious oneness of all things.”

— Lao Tzu, *The Hua Hu Ching*

The Lost Teachings of Lao Tzu

Let There Be Light — Always In All Ways,
<http://home.earthlink.net/~ejlight/index1.html>

“You who have the Light, what are you doing with it ?”

Sponsored by the Association for Light and Life
<http://www.q1.com/ALL>

The Miraculous Pattern of Transformation

by OLFANA
Celestial Teacher in Half Moon Bay, CA
May 21, 1995

Transformation is the miracle of growth. Energy evolves and flows in a fluid pattern of unique expression, as we transform ourselves in this life.

We grow from many stimuli: We grow from suffering. We grow as we face our fears. We grow as we conceive new hope for ourselves in life. We grow as we reach, in compassion, toward others. We grow as we serve our Creator. We grow in faith when we experience success in life. We grow when we face challenges to our integrity and moral values. We grow in moments of pure, delightful happiness in the experiencing of life's beauty.

Transformation is a pattern uniquely designed for each of God's Creations—each grows and transforms in the special and precise way in which choices are made, experiences are faced.

You affect your own transformation by the path you choose to follow in this life. Each path contains its own beauty, its own points of perspective. As you travel along a path through a forested hillside, you reach those points where there is a clearing, and you stop and admire the view—the perspective gained by having made the effort to follow the path to that particular point.

I encourage you to consider such moments of contemplation of the view gained, in your own path of transformation of your soul. Stop and enjoy the view, my dear students. “Consider how far you have come, not, merely, how far you wish to go.”

This is a paraphrase of a statement made by my dear sister-teacher, Abigail. I savor the wisdom

expressed in this admonition to you all. God wishes us to reflect upon our path toward Him. He wishes us to contemplate the wisdom gained, at any one moment in our progress. This is the gift of our experiential life in time and space—that we will have much to ponder, to consider, as we continue on in our eternal career.

This life is filled with stimulation for our growth. It is an opportunity to garner great gifts of understanding and perception for our being. One's transformation into a God-Conscious Being of Light will demand much in the way of effort and experience. I ask you to consider this time spent within this physical world as a grand opportunity to experience many stimuli for this transformation experience.

You are on a demanding and challenging hike up the mountainside of life, and there is much to be seen, much to be experienced, much to be heartened by, in this effort. Face all points of exertion as those moments when you focus your resources, just as you focus as you climb the steep inclines of a path. When you face the troubles and challenges of your life, focus, my dear ones, upon the strength you can derive from the God-Conscious Understanding and Truth that you possess. Draw upon this, now, as you face any difficulties in life. This is the means by which you will pull yourself upward on the steep slopes of the path.

And, then again, I say to you, stop, when you have reached the higher slope, and look back. Consider how far you have come. Admire the beauty that you are now allowed to experience, from this higher perspective. You see life now with the greater advantage of a broader and more encompassing perspective. Strive to go far upon this path, while you remain within this physical life, my dear students. “Make headway,” as it were, while the light allows you clarity in your path. Go far on this path, and you will feel much

satisfaction when you reach the closure of your time in this physical existence. You will say to yourself:

“I have, indeed, served myself well by extending myself in such an effort. I have covered much ground, and I feel most satisfied at the point I have now reached in my path to the Father. I

accept, with peacefulness in my heart, the ending of this phase, and now look with hope and anticipation toward the path I will follow on the morrow.”

Transform yourselves in this manner, my dear students, and you will thrive! My lesson is now complete.

TRANSFORMATION TOWARD ... YOUR PERFECTION

by **TOMAS/Celestial Teacher, Pittsburgh, PA**
Sunday, December 6, 1998

The lesson at hand is one of your perfection.

We would like to discuss with you today your responsibility for assuming your degree of awareness of your own perfection. In assuming an understanding of your own perfection then you are assuming a certain responsibility for the manifestation of that perfection and the resultant effects upon your environment, your peers and, essentially, upon the evolving Supreme.

Let us take a picture, for instance, of the process you are familiar with now, wherein you come together and study under the influence of these beings brought to you by and through the Teacher Corp.

In this setting here, Gerdean is the person who gets up and turns on the “TV screen,” but all of you are watching the movie. All of you are being affected by the program you are watching.

What kind of program are you watching? We would have you watch Jack LaLaine and actually throw yourself into the program, rather than observe it as a divine comedy or a romance, and simply observe it as entertainment that you can turn off at the end of the designated time space.

In observing truth, beauty and goodness, you are not assuming your responsibility in it; but by allowing truth, beauty and goodness to be passed through you, by and through your acknowledgement of your ability to cooperate with perfection, you have contributed yourself to perfection.

... You will appreciate that each mortal who is indwelt by a Mystery Monitor is certainly working tirelessly to impart beauty, truth and goodness to the mortal of its association. But it is a challenge, in particular when the mortal mind is

set against truth, beauty and goodness.

Herein is a plethora of opportunity for you to bring this love of God that you have into actuality for others to see. Not in your life, but in theirs! How can you engage them in an understanding of what divine beauty is or eternal truth or the goodness of divine love and even fraternal love?

These feelings, sensations, values are frequently overlooked as impossible of attainment in those who have been deprived of the joy of knowing Father in the ways that you here have been.

But you can help to enervate the spirit life without by savoring the spirit life within, and guiding yourself into allowance of perfection manifestation. In other words, you yourself may turn on the “TV” or you may turn the channel. You may turn it off. You have will. Free will.

And your understanding of perfection is part of that which goes into the symphony. Allow your notes to practice. Allow your relative perfection the opportunity to warm up, to sing off key as necessary, because in due course your practice of relative perfection will allow you to attain a greater appreciation for your perfection and how you may manifest divine perfection through your willingness to do his will, but it requires a sense of commitment and responsibility. How else will you notice that you have grown, and how else can you rejoice in the growth of the spirit that you see when you look into the eyes of your fellow?

And what rejoicing we experience when we look into your eyes and realize that you are more perfect today than you were yesterday, and that as such you are more willing and able to be of effective service to the many. You radiate the fruit of the spirit more willingly, pray more effectively, rejoice more selflessly. Perfection is a part of your life. Enjoy it.

THE CHURCH WITHIN: *Where is God When We Need Him?*

11-8-98 Service - #111

Offered by Minister Jill Mary Megow

I suppose you have never asked the question, "Where is God when we need Him?"..... Nah... I didn't think so... Me neither! Well ... maybe once... or twice....

Quotes

(from: "Forgotten Truth" - by Huston Smith)
"Hope is indispensable to human health—to psychological health most immediately, but because man is a psychosomatic whole, to physical health as well ... Ascending a sheer-faced cliff, a mountaineer can lodge his pick in an overhead crevice and, chinning himself on it, advance. Hope is the psyche's pick."

(from: "The Tao of Pooh" - by Benjamin Hoff)
"As Pooh found out with the North Pole, once we see what the situation is and what we can do about it, we need to utilize everything we find along the way in order to accomplish whatever is required. More often than not, the things we need are there already; all we have to do is make use of them."

(from: "The Observing Self" - by Arthur J. Deikman, MD)
"Religions, while they prescribe the virtuous life, have a strong tendency to emphasize reward and punishment ... the accumulation of heavenly credit ... The ability to receive Knowledge is a functional matter, having nothing to do with reward or punishment in the usual sense. Thus, one does not "earn" enlightenment, one becomes capable of receiving it."

(from: The RSV Bible - Romans 5:2-5) - Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

(from: The Urantia Papers - Paper-159 Section-3 - quoting Jesus) - Teach all believers that those who enter the kingdom are not thereby rendered immune to the accidents of time or to the ordinary catastrophes of nature. Believing

the gospel will not prevent getting into trouble, but it will insure that you shall be unafraid when trouble does overtake you. If you dare to believe in me and wholeheartedly proceed to follow after me, you shall most certainly by so doing enter upon the sure pathway to trouble. I do not promise to deliver you from the waters of adversity, but I do promise to go with you through all of them.

The Sermon

Where is God when we need Him?

Why did you let this happen, God? How could you be so cruel, God? Why didn't you answer my prayer, God? I prayed with all the faith I have within me that you would heal my child, my wife, my husband ... Why didn't you answer, God? Why didn't you hear me and respond by giving me what I expected should be your "gift"?...what I WANTED!

Have you ever been in that space mentally, emotionally? Most people I have known have experienced a major crisis in their lives at which time they turned to God, and many felt God didn't hear them. Some have disowned Jesus and God for the rest of their lives. Some have been able to look back, after adequate grieving, and see God's gifts after the fact.

Have you lost a dearly loved one? Have you been rejected by one whom you gave all your love to? Have you given birth to a child who was less than perfect? Has your child or loved one been maimed or killed in a horrid accident? All these experiences leave us truly devastated, and seeking answers.

I watched the Maury Povich show this Friday. It was about courageous children. One teen had been horribly burned in a house fire at 6 months of age. She has lived her life being rejected, taunted, and friendless because of her truly horrid appearance. Another teen had her jeans pant leg caught in a lawnmower and it cut off both her feet. She yearned to dance. Two

teens had been horribly attacked by dogs and suffered severe trauma and/or disfigurement. Another teen had his arm completely severed in half in a tractor accident. When asked how the now crippled arm had affected his life, he said, “Well, I’ve had to adjust my golf swing!”

God didn’t cause these horrid accidents. Due to the imperfect state of our human bodies, He can’t always perform the miracle we yearn for, or He may choose not to give the miracle because He sees a greater miracle for all involved in surviving the experience. But was God there? Did he respond? Well...

Where did these kids find the courage to face each day? Who did God bring to them to help them find the courage to fight for life, to bear the cruelties of peers? How did they find hope? Do they want to be forever pitied? Or do they want to be seen for who they are inside—their human spirit?

Where did the parents find the courage to encourage their children to want to live, to make it through another painful day? What transformed the parents from pitying to inspiring? Did those parents discover love for their children that went far beyond the love they might have experienced had the accident not happened? Did they inspire abilities in their child in the face of their limitations that otherwise would have lain dormant their entire lives?

How has the accident changed their perspective on life for their entire lifetime; like what is truly valuable in the life experience. How many have become role models for others of what is truly important in life, BECAUSE they survived their experience?

God is always with us. He dwells within each one of us and hears each and every soulful cry. He may not give us the outward miracle we

desire—the perfected body, the perfected mind. But the gifts of courage, new ways to be “all we can be” in the face of limitations and loss (the gift of inspired creative thought), the gift of unconditional love, compassion for all God’s children, the desire to be a role model for others who have suffered, who are discouraged — these are some of God’s gifts.

Through our most challenging experiences, those of us who look for the gift, can find it many fold once we have grieved our loss. Are not these gifts of the human spirit to persevere in the face of grievous losses the greatest growth we could ever hope to attain as humans? Do we not then pass on this inspired way of living to others?

So many of us wish we could leave a legacy of ourself when we depart this world. Perhaps we would all benefit from asking ourself what that truly means. What is the greatest gift you can give daily that will be YOUR legacy? A living legacy instead of a material one? Hmmm.

The Prayer

Dear Ever Loving Parent,

Help me to find You and Your gifts in my times of greatest need, that I may then heal and reach out to all my brothers and sisters as a living example of inspiration and hope. I thank you for the opportunities to serve my brothers and sisters inspiringly by surviving my personal challenges through discovering You are always there.

You ALL are Within the Infinitely Loving Embrace of our Universal Parent, The Creator’s Infinite Love, through me, to all of You,
Minister Jill Mary Megow

“The Church Within”

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CELESTIAL SURFING: **Mind-stirring Posts from the World of EMail**

PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER AND LOWER MIND

From: MINDFUL WORKS / DON TYLER

There is a higher and a lower function of mind. They can be thought of as two minds. It's important to recognize that such division is a bit arbitrary and fictional, as for example the way we separate the sciences of astronomy from biology when they are really just of the one set of physical science. Our lower and higher minds are not like separate entities, they are functions of one whole; ego and spirit may conflict or cooperate, but normally tend to conflict.

The lower mind is negative. It argues. It doubts. It is skeptical. It pulls a thing apart to see what makes it tick, and makes its conclusions based on the pieces thus dismembered. This is not to say the lower mind is "bad." It is analytical. The whole of the scientific method of investigation derives from the lower mind function. There's plenty in life of which we "ought" to be suspicious and skeptical. It's healthy, in balance with the higher mind. When deprived of the higher mind function, however, when the lower mind predominates, there is cynicism. When old people, or people who have suffered a stroke or other mental disability, lose their higher mind functions, they become argumentative, "crabby." (So one Physical Therapist has told me, one of the tests performed for degree of cognitive recovery concerns the agree-ability or disagree-ability of the patient.)

The higher mind is positive. It agrees. It accepts. It is believing. It puts the puzzle pieces together to see the whole picture, and can extrapolate a bigger picture even from a few pieces. This is not to say the higher mind is "good." It is uncritical. It can swallow camels, accept theories without investigation, incorporate belief systems warts and all. This higher mind permits the leap

of faith, but requires the grounding of its analytical component to make the prudent discernment of wisdom. When deprived of the lower mind functions, when the higher mind is bereft of critical analysis, one can become a misguided dupe. Mind-altering substances, overmuch passion, loyalties which obscure intelligence, these can disable the critical faculties, and a person becomes passively accepting, "flakey."

The problem for the spirit, the problem of faith, is to overcome the evidence of things seen which in this life by and large tend to argue against faith, to set the stage for the leap of faith without losing the critical ability which makes functioning in this life possible. Ascending the psychic circles is not entirely a spiritual matter, but also involves, loosely speaking, one's relationship with the material level. The tight-wire act requires finding the balance between skeptical inquiry on the one hand and blind faith on the other.

Have you ever considered the dilemma faced by the human Jesus? He was presented with gradual awareness of his pre-existence and divine identity. Were normal mortals such as you or I to have such ideas, we would be right to doubt them, to consider them vainglorious imaginings. But in his case, they were valid. Did Jesus critically question these presentations? I presume that as an intelligent and balanced person he must have always (up until his completion of the mortal task) had in his mind the theoretical possibility that he was in a certain sense mad.

But we face a similar dilemma. We may not have to deal with the question of our personal pre-existence, but we are presented with the question of faith in an unseen God, an unheard indwelling Spirit of that Creator, an almost unimaginable future destiny. The leap of faith is made over a bottomless chasm, and the lower mind advises against making the jump based on both the

apparent breadth of the gap and the depth of the fall. Once made, we are entirely different people. We cannot any longer be vainly self-serving and must truly love and dedicate ourselves to this (as the lower mind would see it) theoretical Creator and our alleged siblings in the Spirit.

The lower mind cannot appreciate the higher mind's choices. Looking at the pieces separately, the lower mind cannot figure out the picture which the higher mind discerns readily from a few hints. The lower mind says "no." Only the higher mind can overcome the doubts, transcend the endless criticism and skepticism, launch out across the void for goals not discerned in every detail.

The lower mind is like a bean-counting accountant who will tell you why the tax laws and the balance sheet mitigate against a risk. This is good and important. You should listen to your accountant. But the accountant knows his business, not yours; the analyst cannot tell you about the consequences of the unknown, only the probabilities of the well-known. In the end, the higher mind must lead, must dominate, but carefully, with the lower mind for reflection and correction. Both are needed, but only one can rule.

*Don Tyler, Washington County, Oklahoma USA
<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/mindful/ublinx.htm>*

INTELLECTUAL BONDAGE: What Does the Urantia Book Mean?

From: Steve Zabielski

<stevezabielski@email.msn.com>

URANTIA BOOK, P.1112 - §6 2. Salvation from intellectual bondage: man shall know the truth, and the truth shall set him free.

Anyone, what do you think "intellectual bondage" is?

The way I understand The Urantia Book's teachings on intellect is that its what gets us to the door but not through it. Always throughout eternity we will go back and forth between thinking about spirit reality and experiencing spirit reality. The two cannot occur simultaneously. To believe that intellectual thinking about spiritual realities is equivalent to spiritual understanding and then making no effort to take the next steps to be in intellectual bondage, imo.

"Prayer is designed to make man less thinking but more realizing; it is not designed to increase knowledge but rather to expand insight." pg.. 1616

"Religion must continually labor under a paradoxical necessity: the necessity of making effective use of thought while at the same time discounting the spiritual serviceableness of all thinking." pg. 112

P.503 - §3 We are taught that a chance meeting on Paradise reveals more of mutual understanding than could be communicated by a mortal language in a thousand years.

I think we understand each other here more than we want to admit. We seem to try so hard NOT to understand one another. Our feisty human natures would be deprived of a good tiff .. by admitting too readily that we do indeed recognize the truth behind another's words. So we pretend to ourselves and those around that we don't get it. That way we can spend a lot of time organizing, arranging, and stacking words in our defense. I think that is "intellectual bondage". What do you think?

The ego likes to make things complicated, whereas the spirit likes to simplify. Intellectual arrogance assumes that to be complicated is to be sophisticated and therefore more interesting, and of course superior. But Jesus taught, "Verily, verily, I say to you, except you turn about and

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become more like this child you will make little progress in the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall humble himself and become as this little one, the same shall become greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso receives such a little one receives me.” pg. 1761

MATERIALISM AND WISDOM

From: KELLY ELSTROTT

<kelstrot@bellsouth.net>

To: urantia@www.urantia.org

CC: ubtalk@utalk.org

Below please find a quote from the Old Testament book of wisdom and two selections from the Urantia book. Note how advanced, poetic and incisive this man is who lived in Alexandria over two thousand years ago. We go through each day and see the beauty of creation manifested in nature and the vital spirit in the personalities all around us. Life is good.

For all men were by nature foolish who were in ignorance of God, and who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing him who is, and from studying the works did not discern the artisan;

But either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circuit of the stars, or the mighty water, or the luminaries of heaven, the governors of the world, they considered gods.

Now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these; for the original source of beauty fashioned them.

Or if they were struck by the might and energy, let them from these things realize how much more powerful is he who made them.

For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen.

But yet, for these the blame is less; For they indeed have gone astray perhaps, though they seek God and wish to find him. For they search busily among his works, but are distracted by what they see, because the things seen are fair.

But again, not even these are pardonable. For they so far succeeded in knowledge that they could speculate about the world, how did they not more quickly find its Lord? Wisdom 13:1-9

THE URANTIA BOOK: 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 inspirational 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 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. UB 1118

Materialism reduces man to a soulless automaton and constitutes him merely an arithmetic symbol finding a helpless place in the mathematical formula of an unromantic and mechanistic universe. But whence comes all this vast universe of mathematics without the Master Mathematician? Science may expatiate on the conservation of matter, but religion validates the conservation of men's souls - it concerns their experience with spiritual realities and eternal values.

Do everything in love, Kelly

SPIRITUALIZING MATERIAL AND INTELLECTUAL WEALTH

From: RON CYR <gorf@premier1.net>

To the rich and the poor ...

How to lose a soul.

The URANTIA Book mentions many times how hard it is for a rich man to go to heaven. We also have the example of the rich man who refused to be a disciple for Jesus, though he later changed his mind, because he would not let go of his money. I always equated being rich with material possessions, but what about “intellectual wealth?”

Let’s say that we have a human being that spends all his/her energy, mind and consciousness in acquiring material wealth. If through all this life that human being NEVER spiritualizes his acquired fortune, at its death the money will stay behind and he would have nothing to carry on with in the next life.

For the sake of discussion let’s take the extreme case and make a judgement. In other words all his life has been used to search for material gain as an end, instead of a means to an end. He has never built the embryo of a soul, and so his Thought Adjuster has nothing to come back to after his death.

Now let’s take a human being who has spent all his life in acquiring “intellectual wealth,” getting degree after degree, reading the best books and acquiring knowledge by the tons. As above let’s take the extreme case and make a judgement. If that person has spent his entire life in acquiring intellectual knowledge and never spiritualized that wealth then he also never built the embryo of a soul.

As above, if all his intellect has been an end to

itself instead of a means to an end, the soul wasn’t built and the TA has nothing to come back to after his death. Also when the brain dies all the amassed knowledge dies with that person, if it has not been spiritualized.

Being poor and uneducated might be an asset after all. Is it the reason why the teaching of Jesus was better accepted by the lower class of people of his day? Somebody who is rich, be it intellectually or materially, has to give up the LOVE of his wealth, but not the wealth itself. The poor and uneducated have nothing to “give up” to “accept” the teaching of Jesus. But the rich have to “give up” first then “accept” the teachings of Jesus. It seems to be a double whammy for the rich.

Just a thought.

WALKING THE GARDEN PATH TOWARD ENLIGHTENMENT

From: RICK GILES

This path requires much effort. It is much like digging a spring garden. Much cultivation is needed; the weeds of the mind must be removed; fear which chokes character; envy, a pride which crowds love; inertia which blocks growth.

As one reaches the end of soul cultivation, sincere, disciplined, and devoted effort must be applied. Row after row may lead to the feeling that enough has been done already, or perhaps the feeling that one has done greatly. Pursue. The end is near; the effort is more intense.

Final cultivation, however, is not enlightenment. Now begins the process of fertilization. Diligent study of the writings of the sages, one pointed and wholehearted meditation and worship, complete dedication to the complete fulfillment of God’s will. All these must enrich one’s life. Fertilization is itself not enlightenment either.

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Next comes the planting of the spiritual seeds in this soul soil, free from mind weeds and enriched with devoted practice. These seeds are the seeds of truth, beauty, goodness, high ideals, spiritual love, compassion and mercy, tolerance, patience, grace, peace, sincerity, consistency, constancy, and consecration.

Upon completion of planting, enlightenment has not been attained. The most important stage has begun, the grace of divine ministry; the spiritual sun which illuminates our being must be received. The spiritual bestowals, the water of God which nourishes our seedlings must be received. Vitalization of our efforts comes from God.

This is not full enlightenment. Now begins our bearing period. In divine partnership we put forth spiritual fruit; whole-hearted service ministry for our brethren on the path of soul cultivation, fertilization, and seeding; and honest prayer for the grace bestowals of God upon us all.

This is the harvest. This is enlightenment. We have not acquired it; we may have taken part in preparing it; it is not ours; enlightenment gained is enlightenment shared - only. Given by God, bestowed by his children, received by our brothers and sisters ... with pure love.

From the Urantia Book: "*Spiritual development depends, first, on the maintenance of a living spiritual connection with true spiritual forces and, second, on the continuous bearing of spiritual fruit: yielding the ministry to one's fellows of that which has been received from one's spiritual benefactors. Page 1095*

one of tons

by jim mccallon

we bestimate our guesstimates
then live them out as testaments
we vision clearly what has been
then strain to see what's next again
we build and build quite unaware
the knot that we've been tying there

upon the quilt upholding all, one stitch alone - so very small

and yet as it, our worth is shown
by ties we have with folks we've known
for if our ways show clear and pure
they're bound to bind with us - for sure.....

so many times, so many words
so many thoughts left to the birds
so many hopes, so many fears
so many paths are blocked by tears
a smile undone portrays a cross
depicting life as some great loss

you're here right now, then there some later
today you're worse - tomorrow greater
sometimes you're less, then again you're more
comparing's such a boresome chore
who cares? i don't - be who you are -
i've never measured up so far -

but think on this, and ponder once -
in life who really is the dunce?
the guy without whose smile can't fade
or the man of frowns whose way is made?
those in trouble are lessons which often show
the mistakes they've made are the way they grow
but the man of ease, who hassles not -
forgets in life there is a lot -
(albeit very often, it's just a plot)

ok, tada, and see you soon -
i've kids to raise beneath the moon -
(c 1998 jimjr)

STEPPING STONES TO GOD

by **RON FAULK**

Life is not like a meander through the woods. It is like a journey along a course of stepping stones in which there is a “best spot” designated for each foot-fall.

Each of us has a best path, a path designated for us and commensurate with God’s highest will. This is the path of least resistance, that is, of least resistance to God. It is also the path of most fruitful potential.

The problem with taking life as a meander is that we tend to get nowhere; we have no final destiny and the intermediate destinies we set have no purposeful sequence. Each person has definite “aptitudes,” specific skills that need to be exercised and inherent potentials that need development. This very much includes spiritual aptitudes.

Each person has a characteristic matrix of spiritual capabilities. We might think of them as unique lines of access to God, with no two persons having exactly the same spiritual connections. No two receive the spirit in exactly the same way nor do they reflect spirit exactly like anyone else, nor do any two persons have the same imaginative means for expressing spiritual truth.

Each person reflects a particular aspect of Godly truth, beauty and goodness, and this is one reason why each person is so valuable, even in a cosmos of virtually infinite proportions. Should that person not be reborn, then, howsoever slight, some perspective on the nature of God will be lost forever.

Spirit is ancestor to all energy and it also a unique form of energy. As one characteristic of energy is endless transformation, so spirit is

transformed infinitely and eternally, and yet all spirit is One, wherever it is found. It is of the One essence of God regardless of how many permutations or expression this spirit may have undergone.

And yet no two persons express it in exactly the same way. Similarly, all personality is of One essence — all personalities are recognizable and knowable as such, and yet no two are alike, not on any world through its many ages, and not across the universe of worlds.

A poet once wrote that life is like a dome of many-colored glass that “stains the white radiance of eternity.” Spirit is like the white light that contains all color, and each individual life is comparable to a specific array of translucent forms that “stain” the spirit-light and thereby reflect a moving panoply of intricate and irradiated shapes and hues. And these shapes and hues are characteristic of that individual.

Some persons stain the essence of eternity into more beautiful forms than others do. Some persons have more madness than harmony in their spiritual radiance, whereas others reflect the essence of God in the most subtle and sublime of ways, arresting even high beings who perchance to witness such displays.

Each life has tremendous artistic potential to reflect God’s light in ways of unique and resonating beauty. Yet so few take advantage of their potential.

It is one thing to have potential; it is another to fulfill it. And to begin fulfillment is all that can be done in this life, for to achieve full potential is to “become perfect” even as the Father has challenged us, and that challenge will take long ages.

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To become an artist in material things requires first vision, second the gift of expression, and third great effort to refine skills enough to form an adequate expression. To become an artist in the spiritual realm also requires vision and the gift of expression, however all persons have these for they are natural endowments. But we also must make great, extended, and disciplined effort and this requires choosing a deliberate course in life and not just wandering hither and yon or dabbling in this and that.

To get to a specific destination we must take a certain route. True, many routes may take us there, and each in its own way may have a certain virtue. But only one route will take us there most quickly, will allow us to practice and develop our spiritual talents most brightly and effectively.

So few people have a real sense of spiritual destination, so few people live up to anything like their spiritual potential, so few realize what great and latent talents they have, so few people change the world for the good.

And so few realize that the shortest route to the destination, which is the route of God's will, is the shortest route to joy, to fulfillment of being, to health, to truth, beauty and goodness, to peace, and even to ecstasy. How we all long with unfathomable yearning to fulfill that of which we are most capable, to express real purpose, to be what we can best be. The best way to fulfillment is to find God's will for us.

And yet so many are lost and wandering. They think it really does not make any difference what they do. How wrong! And how spiritually debilitating.

Each step we take has a designated stepping stone. And one stone leads to another. And there is a pilot spirit-light within us that, looking out with us through our eyes, can point out each

stepping stone if we will but give the spirit credence and voice and vision. But the mind that sees the spirit-light, the mind that hears the still low voice as it directs us, cannot be a mind disturbed and restless; it cannot be a mind in endless dialogue with itself; it cannot be a mind obsessed with itself; it cannot be a mind that denies all life but its own.

It must be a mind that lives with a certain amount of stillness, one that can spread its surface like untroubled waters upon which the radiance of eternity can reflect in clear forms and unwavering expressions.

Few minds are like this, but all could be. This world is a thoroughfare full of stresses and disturbances, and few are the external signs and mile-stones that mark the paths of the spirit. And so the spirit within, when it can catch our attention, when it finds the still, clear moments in the mind of its indwelling, must use all varieties of lures to draw that mind's attention to the next stepping stone.

And often it must lure us with impressions of things to come, with suggestions of quick rewards that are not really commensurate with what we will really find. Like children, we often have to be lured with promises of candy and other sweet and immediate rewards, in order to get us to move to the right spot. We think, in our immaturity, that the purpose of moving there is to get the candy, the immediate reward; but the purpose is really something quite different.

The consequence of this is that often the reason we think we go from step to step is not the real reason at all. Sooner or later the spirit-child must learn to trust the spirit light and not to look for premeditated reward but to focus its attention on the spirit and take each step as it wills. And as soon as one step is taken, we must learn to move quickly back to the spirit for direction to the next.

Indeed, there is a faculty of the mind, or more properly a direction-sense of the evolving soul, that can learn to stay in the light of the spirit while the other faculties or parts of mind gaze in wonder and appreciation at the life-journey.

This is something like learning to ride a bicycle, which at first demands the child's whole concentration, and it seems s/he will never be able to balance and keep going. But one day, almost unaware, a part of the self has "developed" that rides the bike virtually without thinking, while the more immediate faculties enjoy the ride.

So, at first, the whole being must be focused on the technique of finding the spirit light and taking the next right step. And as soon as one step is taken, the self must not be distracted with puerile ideas about reward and punishment, but begin looking with the spirit for the next step.

Eventually, following the spirit becomes second nature. And then when we get out of the spirit it becomes very obvious, just as obvious as falling off the bicycle onto the ground.

And as we travel the path laid out for us by the spirit, our motions become increasingly graceful, we become dancers moving to the choreography of the spirit, and we begin to reflect peace and wonder. Life becomes artistic and beautiful so that others cannot fail to mark us and be attracted to us, to want to follow us and know us and learn what we have learned.

And this is wonderful but it too must not become a distraction from the spirit. It is a danger and something of a perplexity that many, as they start to flow in the spirit, and as they begin to move from stepping stone to stone, and as others begin to be attracted to them, notice this attractiveness and begin to fixate on it — and very subtly become proud of it.

Then they begin to want to command others.

Their ego takes over and pride reasserts itself, as they exercise a new-found spiritual authority. And then they fall from the grace of the spirit. They begin to listen to their alter-ego, and even delude themselves into thinking this alter ego is the spirit. And many such self-deluded persons become authoritative and, craving attention and honor, stray from the stepping-stones of the spirit, sometimes for the remainder of their lives. "There is a way which seems right to man, but the end thereof is death."

Such minds become disturbed and jealous of the spirit, and these are signs that all is not well, for the spirit is freely bestowed on all. They believe they are the one path to the spirit. But finding the spirit light within only requires the true desire of the self.

The religion of the spirit of God has no gnosticism, no theosophy, no secret rites, no privileged mysteries, no special knowledge for elite adepts while a lower version is taught to the masses, for God is no respecter of persons, he bestows himself freely to all and without mystery. The mystery is fabricated by man.

Much, very much of the mystery that surrounds religion has been created by those looking for clever and cheap ways to God, rather than executing the simple but demanding competencies of the spirit. Love, love as between affectionate and caring brothers and sisters, is the mark of the spirit. When any one seeks to lord it over others, that is not the spirit at work.

The first lesson to learn in following the spirit is to take each step without expectations of immediate reward. Reward will come, but it will not be according to preconceived expectations. Indeed it will be greater than those ideas. These preconceived notions make it difficult to become aware of the true rewards of the spirit for when the mind is focused on its own ideas it blinds itself to other, even greater possibilities.

STEPPING STONES TO GOD

Sometimes the spirit must even lure the person to the next stepping stone with emotional promises, with the suggestion of the appeasement of longings or self-perceived emotional needs.

Many people, as a result living in a chaotic and stressful environment, have developed emotional fixations or addictions and their lives are very much directed by the need, at least the desire, to get their next emotional "fix." The spirit may have to use this lure to get the person to take a spiritual step.

And when the person does so, they may be surprised or disappointed that their emotional "fix" is not forthcoming. If they will still themselves they will see what else is there, for it will be a greater reward although perhaps not obvious.

This is why we must all learn to follow after the spirit without expectation of immediate gratification. The fruits of the spirit will become apparent in God's time, if we will but trust him. Jesus spoke of this when he said, "first there was the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And then when the grain was ripe, he put forth the sickle, and the harvest was finished." (UB 1693).

Once we follow the stepping stones that represent the path of God's will, soon we begin climbing out of the lowlands and tangled glens of shadow and confusion. Soon we begin to find entirely new vistas.

We come out into a full and resplendent morning graced with a far-reaching light that extends our vision over the most sublime and intriguing of perspectives. Now we have achieved the foothills of the spirit adventure and are close to the far-reaching mountains of destiny that it is our birthright to travel and explore.

April 6, 1998

Angelness

From: VLMilleroo@aol.com

An Angel wrote:

Many people will walk in and out of your life,
but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart.

To handle yourself, use your head;
To handle others, use your heart.

Anger is only one letter short of danger.

If someone betrays you once, it's his fault;
if he betrays you twice, it's your fault.

Great minds discuss ideas;
Average minds discuss events;
Small minds discuss people.

God gives every bird it's food,
But He does not throw it into it's nest.

He who loses money, loses much;
He who loses a friend, loses more;
He who loses faith, loses all.

Beautiful young people are acts of nature,
But beautiful old people are works of art.

Learn from the mistakes of others.
You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

The tongue weighs practically nothing,
But so few people can hold it.

Friends, you and me....
you brought another friend...
and then there were three ...
we started our group...
Our circle of friends...
and like that circle ...
there is no beginning or end..

LESSONS OF LIFE LEARNED

POSTED by: HugMary@aol.com

I've learned - that no matter how much I care, some people just don't care back.

I've learned - that it takes years to build up trust, and only seconds to destroy it.

I've learned - that it's not what you have in your life but who you have in your life that counts.

I've learned - that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes. After that, you'd better know something.

I've learned - that you shouldn't compare yourself to the best others can do.

I've learned - that you can do something in an instant that will give you heartache for life.

I've learned - that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

I've learned - that you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

I've learned - that you can keep going long after you think you can't.

I've learned - that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I've learned - that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I've learned - that regardless of how hot and steamy a relationship is at first, the passion fades and there had better be something else to take its place.

I've learned - that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

I've learned - that money is a lousy way of keeping score.

I've learned - that my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time.

I've learned - that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will be the ones to help you get back up.

I've learned - that sometimes when I'm angry I have the

right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I've learned - that true friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance. Same goes for true love.

I've learned - that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.

I've learned - that maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and what you've learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

I've learned - that you should never tell a child their dreams are unlikely or outlandish. Few things are more humiliating, and what a tragedy it would be if they believed it.

I've learned - that your family won't always be there for you. It may seem funny, but people you aren't related to can take care of you and love you and teach you to trust people again. Families aren't biological.

I've learned - that no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

I've learned - that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

I've learned - that no matter how bad your heart is broken, the world doesn't stop for your grief.

I've learned - that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

I've learned - that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I've learned - that we don't have to change friends if we understand that friends change.

I've learned - that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret.. It could change your life forever.

I've learned - that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

LESSONS OF LIFE LEARNED

I've learned - that no matter how you try to protect your children, they will eventually get hurt and you will hurt in the process.

I've learned - that your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even know you.

I've learned - that even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.

I've learned - that credentials on the wall do not make you

a decent human being.

I've learned - that the people you care most about in life are taken from you too soon.

I've learned - that it's hard to determine where to draw the line between being nice and not hurting people's feelings and standing up for what you believe

I've learned - that you cannot make someone love you. All you can do is be someone who can be loved. The rest is up to them.

Instructions for Life

1. Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully.
2. Memorize your favorite poem.
3. Don't believe all you hear.
4. Don't spend all you have.
5. Don't sleep all you want.
6. When you say, "I love you," mean it.
7. When you say, "I'm sorry", look the person in the eye.
8. Be engaged at least six months before you get married.
9. Believe in love at first sight.
10. Never laugh at anyone's dreams.
11. Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely.
12. In disagreements, fight fairly. No name calling.
13. Don't judge people by their relatives.
14. Talk slowly, but think quick.
15. When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, smile and ask, "Why do you want to know?".
16. Remember that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
17. Call your mom.
18. Say "God bless you" when you hear someone sneeze.
19. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.
20. Remember the three R's: Respect for self; Respect for others; Responsibility for all your actions.
21. Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
22. When you realize you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
23. Smile when picking up the phone. The caller will hear it in your voice.
24. Marry a spouse you love to talk to. As you get older, his or her conversational skills will be as important as any other.
25. Spend some time alone.
26. Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
27. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
28. Read more books and watch less TV.
29. Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll get to enjoy it a second time.
30. Trust in God but lock your car.
31. A loving atmosphere in your home is so important. Do all you can to create a tranquil harmonious home.
32. In disagreements with loved ones, deal with a current situation. Don't bring up the past.
33. Read between the lines.
34. Share your knowledge. It's a way to achieve immortality.
35. Be gentle with the earth.
36. Pray. There's immeasurable power in it.
37. Never interrupt when you are being flattered.
38. Mind your own business.
39. Don't trust a person who doesn't close his or her eyes when you kiss them.
40. Once a year, go someplace you've never been before.
41. If you make a lot of money, put it to use helping others while you are living. That is wealth's greatest satisfaction.
42. Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a stroke of luck.
43. Learn the rules, then break some.
44. Remember that the best relationship is one where your love for each other is greater than your need for each other.
45. Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
46. Remember that your character is your destiny.
47. Approach Love and cooking with reckless abandon

A Loving God ... A Violent World

by JERRY MCCOLLUM

IT WAS ASKED: *Finally, how do you reconcile that a Loving Father created a Universe in which death is natural and violent death is part of the everyday life in nature?*

This is a recurring question among many people who are trying to reconcile the personal and impersonal attributes of God alongside His far-flung physical creation. Our sense of justice is infantile, yet we yearn for it. We want justice and equality NOW, this minute, for everyone, everywhere, yet we cannot agree on the particulars because we ourselves are imperfect and evolving social animals.

There is no “justice” in nature other than survival of the fittest. As long as we are evolving beings, whether as creatures or as a species, justice will be the impersonal PROCESS of God’s universal fairness and certainty. Any concept of justice less than this is based on impatience and personalized interpretation. The assurance of justice is exemplified in our individual senses of fairness and progressively transcended by our kindness and mercy into personal expressions of God’s eternal love.

There is no one to blame or accuse for violence and death, in general. They are simply manifestations of an imperfect, unevolved (but trying) world. Society and civilization have the organismic drive and responsibility to achieve homeostasis through our primitive systems of “justice”. If you read the UB and its attitude toward the groups instrumental in Jesus’ crucifixion, you will see no animosity or blame - pity, perhaps, for individuals involved and caught up in it (like Judas), but not judgment. It is not up to even incredibly brilliant, spiritual and experienced celestial authors of epochal revelations to pass judgment on such individuals. In the long run, justice and fairness WILL prevail.

Finding My Mission

I was longing for a mission;
Fancy made it something grand—
Something that would win the praises
Of the world on every hand;
So I squandered time in waiting
For the chance that never came,
Quite forgot to think of others
In my longings after fame.

But one day I had a vision
Of the needy ones near by
Of the hearts that starve with hunger
Till they faint and fall and die—
Starve for little deeds of kindness,
Or a word of hope and cheer,
And the smiles that cost so little,
But can make it pleasant here.

Then it was I found my mission—
Found what work God meant for me.
And I cried: “Forgive my blindness;
“Now, at last, thank God, I see!”
And my heart that had been selfish
In its longings to be great,
Saw great wide fields of labor waiting
For me just outside my gate.

So I seek to scatter sunshine
In a dark and cheerless place.
Loving words have given courage;
Smiles have cheered the tearful face
In the joy of helping others,
God’s good time I waste no more,
Since my life has found its mission
Waiting at the very door. (author unknown)

A CELESTIAL CHUCKLE: *A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, Ryan, 3. They began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. “If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, ‘Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.’ Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, “Ryan, you be Jesus!”*

Three Little Love Stories

The most caring child

Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose was to find the most caring child.

The winner was a four year old whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there.

When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy replied: "Nothing, I just helped him cry."

Two Nickels and Five Pennies

At a time when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a boy entered a coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress came up and put a glass of water in front of him.

"How much is an ice cream sundae?" asked the boy. "Fifty cents," replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it.

"How much is a dish of plain ice cream?" he inquired. Some people were now waiting for a table, and the waitress was a bit impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she said abruptly. The little boy again counted the coins.

"I'll have the plain ice cream," he said meekly. The waitress brought the ice cream and walked away. The boy finished, paid the cashier, and departed. When the waitress came back, she swallowed hard at what she saw. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies — her tip.

What It Means to Be Adopted

Teacher Debbie Moon's first graders were discussing a picture of a family. One little boy in the picture had a different color hair than the other family members.

One child suggested that he was adopted and a little girl named Jocelynn Jay said, "I know all about adoptions because I was adopted."

"What does it mean to be adopted?" asked another child. "It means," said Jocelynn, "that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy,"

A rose in winter

From: STEVE TILLER

It was winter. My garden outside of my house in Atlanta was in the death grip of a winter that chilled the garden to bone and me to the marrow. And yet the insistent voice within my head kept telling me to go out and see the garden. I walked through the bleak landscape and saw nothing of interest. And yet the voice kept telling me that there was something there I needed to see.

I carefully walked each path that in the spring and summer I had grown to know so well. I walked up near the arbor and glanced carefully around each post. I looked behind the hollies and around the backs of the evergreens that line the walkway that leads around past my office. Still nothing and yet the voice would not quiet itself. I finally walked a way that was more overgrown and less cared for than the manicured parts of the garden during the summer months. It is a path that gets less care because the path dead ends a few yards short of a stone walkway that leads to the street. It was a jumble on the path during wintertime. The quaking bones of a bush with stubble of thorns blocked my way.

As I shoved the brambles out of the way I looked down, I noticed a single rose blooming in the middle of the winter. I sat on the cold ground in front and noticed that another bloom was beginning on the same fragile stem. My butt was cold from the ground and my fingers had begun to turn to ice.

As I touched to the bloom it faded and the petals dropped. I was stunned. The voice in my head told me that I was like the rose. I can fade from lack of attention and love. I touched the bud. It began to quickly swell and formed a complete blossom in a matter of minutes. It was ecstasy to watch what the warmth of my fingers could do for a living flower.

The voice in my head that had been so insistent that I explore the garden was silent. I asked what does this mean. A long moment later I received the impression that the source of all things was within each of us. The life within the rose and the spirit life within me were the same. Both of us would bloom with love and care and die from a lack of the same qualities of life.

The Hindus have a saying.. Namaste... the divine in me beholds the divine in you....

The divine voice in me was urging me to seek my brothers and sisters ... the living roses that can warm me in the Father's beauty.

Exploring Incarnation and Reincarnation

Cyberspace spiritual explorers take on a controversial topic. The Urantia Papers disdain most of our ideas about reincarnation as false but incarnation itself is a major part of the revelation. It all comes down to how you define the terms.

From: RONALD L. BESSER

Ladies and Gentlemen, The word used so mystically in a doctrine that believes souls recycle over and over again in an earthly existence is reincarnation.

Reincarnation is the word incarnation with a prefix that means “repeat.” Incarnation means to be invested with bodily and especially human form and the synonym most often used in its place is the word “embodied”. To reincarnate is to re-embodify human form— in a strict definition.

Incarnate, as you know, has a specific meaning outside of these other meanings and that is the religious doctrine of Deity embodiment as a bestowal upon a world in human or other form and order.

Michael, as Deity, incarnated (the word does not have to mean “body”) as a Seraphim(4th bestowal), as a Lanonadek(2nd bestowal), as a Melchizedek(1st bestowal), and a Material Son (3rd bestowal). The soul of Jesus was the result of the 7th bestowal as a human on Urantia— it did not exist before. That soul has not reincarnated, and apparently is not able to.

To switch direction: It is my personal view that to view reincarnation as literal has forever been placed in disrepute because of the authoritative Urantia Book.

I, like many of you, have tried to reconcile the Thought Adjuster’s career with many souls as a possible explanation of this talk about reincarnation in the sense of re-embodiment in the flesh.

However, there is just one problem even with that: The Father in Adjuster existence (the Adjuster has no form we are told, but he does have detectable spirit presence) sees no time in events and likely considers the multiple indwellings as simultaneous. To reincarnate means a sequence has taken place recognized by the same Adjuster (not the same soul), which is clearly not reality as viewed by the Father. We have no such view without being prompted to testify and then only a very few volunteer to speak of past lives under “professional” regression. I do

not hear or see the Spirit of Truth testifying to this a truth as it does (for me) to the validity of unseen teachers speaking through many of you.

To go another direction as suggested by some on this list:

I am pleased with the idea that we exhibit genetic memories and are hardly aware of the manifestations they cause. Spirit must be aware of them through individuals; the mind is aware of them through cell stimuli (cells talk to each other through the nervous system to signal pain, injury, change, death, division, and so on), and collectively have the ability to “vibrate” and magnify sensory input to the mind for translation into all sorts of “psychic” experiences. Why the personality has a hard time determining meaning represents a universe of investigation I would hardly know how to begin. Cultural programming explains a lot of it, but not all of it.

But I suspect that the above gives rise to so many strange, nearly provable incidences of reincarnation. Although I have to pause when I read the accounts of Bridey Murphy to wonder what else is going on with our fragile and momentary existence within a multiple reality system. Thank Seth for bringing that to our attention in spite of his avowed belief in reincarnation.

We can praise our Creator Father and Mother, and the Revelatory Commission of Nebadon for the anchor they provide in the factual truth of the Urantia Book to hold onto with one hand while we fiddle with these strange mysteries with the other hand. But do remember to hold on, because to fall into the confusion of these traditions with their variable distortions of untrustworthy psychic phenomena may cause one spiritual indigestion if not an outright rash of fear.

URANTIA TEXT QUOTES

UB p. 528: Spornagia are the only creatures in all the universe of Nebadon who experience this or any other sort of reincarnation.

UB p. 953: The orange race was especially given to belief in transmigration and reincarnation. This idea of reincarna-

Exploring Incarnation and Reincarnation

tion originated in the observance of hereditary and trait resemblance of offspring to ancestors. The custom of naming children after grandparents and other ancestors was due to belief in reincarnation. Some later-day races believed that man died from three to seven times. This belief (residual from the teachings of Adam about the mansion worlds), and many other remnants of revealed religion, can be found among the otherwise absurd doctrines of twentieth-century barbarians.

UB p. 1029: The undue concentration on self led certainly to a fear of the nonevolutionary perpetuation of self in an endless round of successive incarnations as man, beast, or weeds. And of all the contaminating beliefs which could have become fastened upon what may have been an emerging monotheism, none was so stultifying as this belief in transmigration—the doctrine of the reincarnation of souls—which came from the Dravidian Deccan. This belief in the weary and monotonous round of repeated transmigrations robbed struggling mortals of their long-cherished hope of finding that deliverance and spiritual advancement in death which had been a part of the earlier Vedic faith.

UB p. 1811: There was, throughout all these regions, a lingering belief in reincarnation. The older Jewish teachers, together with Plato, Philo, and many of the Essenes, tolerated the theory that men may reap in one incarnation what they have sown in a previous existence; thus in one life they were believed to be expiating the sins committed in preceding lives. The Master found it difficult to make men believe that their souls had not had previous existences.

REINCARNATION and DNA

From: STEVEN HECHT

REPLY to an email thread

>>What is your explanation of the phenomena of “past lives?”

I don't have any explanation that I am locked into. Right now, I lean toward applying Rupert Sheldrake's idea of “morphic resonance” and “morphic fields” to this psychological phenomenon. This idea stipulates that all living things function within a presently unmeasurable (probably electromagnetic) “energy” field that allows modes of communication that are not predicated on physical proximity. Sheldrake and others have studied the spatial ramifications of morphic resonance. I don't know if they have studied temporal aspects of this theoretical construct.

It would seem to me that humans, as a biological species

would be able to participate not only in the spatiality of morphic fields (e.g., “ESP,” group hallucinations of the Virgin Mary, etc.), but also, unlike other biological species, manifest the temporal sequelae of these fields. Jung broached this possibility in his theory of archetypes, which are forms of morphic resonance that persist through time in the minds of humans.

This would be a form of racial memory (perhaps resonating electromagnetically in and through the individual's DNA) that would appear in bits and pieces in the conscious and unconscious mind of a person. Just as some individuals are more ‘psychic’ than others in that they can more readily access the spatial aspects of humanity's “noosphere” (per Teilhard de Chardin), others may be better able to resonate with the temporal morphic field. This, theoretically, can occur not only with the past but also with the future, and may account for certain individuals' ability to “see into the future,” whether that is on a mundane level or on the grander level of prophecy.

DEFENDING SETH ON THE SUBJECT OF REINCARNATION

From: ANGUS BOWEN

TO: Ron Besser

Thanks for the warnings. It does seem that what some call “strange mysteries” are just added information. Even more complete information...or maybe different information. “Holding on” is what the Christian Church did for centuries ... and even though the “church” did a tremendous amount of “good,” it has most significantly distorted the psyche of western civilization.

The UB is not something, IMO, to “hold on” to ... rather it is a launching pad into the amazing realms of the unknown.

You have very effectively defined the term “reincarnation” in terms you specifically identify with. This topic was discussed at length a few months ago..and there was a consensus that “reincarnation” as you have described, does not happen.

You also said that incarnation did or didn't need a physical body ... depending. While reincarnation required a physical body ... or at least something to “re embody.”... and something to re-peat.

You took a little shot at Seth's “belief” in reincarnation. If you have been following this thread, Seth has said nothing

about the soul reincarnating nor of humans repeating, or having been “re-embodied” per se ... with all the accoutrements of a TA -- mind, soul and personality.

Seth, in the material I have been referring to, is talking about the “re-embodiment” of cells and ultra subatomic particles down to the units of consciousness that inhabit every particle of energy ... the primal “awareness” each finite particle was born and lives forever with.

Look it up in the UB ... energy never dies.

Look it up in the UB ... the universe is run by “power centers” which have intelligence, consciousness..purpose and creativity. It’s in the book.

All Seth is explaining is the extension of the inherent conscious creativity from the “power centers” on down to the most finite particle. It is “how” the power centers control things.

The concept of “reincarnation” as we know it is not the concept of reincarnation that Seth is explaining.

Remember also that Seth is presumed to be a Secondary Midwayer, or the like ... and he was doing his work prior to the Teaching Mission ... and the eventual spread of the Fifth Epochal Revelation via the UB circulation and dissemination. He does not pre-empt the UB..he does not contradict the UB. He is explaining universal functions sans the UB..

Energy does reincarnate. Since energy “embodies” those primal CU’s ...units of consciousness....and since energy does not die ... it, in effect, reincarnates when its prior function is finished. And it carries within its consciousness ... not just ITS prior experience but the combined total experience of all other units of consciousness.

It works just as the combined intelligence of mankind works., or the current state of religious thinking works, or the combined state of spiritual readiness worksthe very principles that were judged as a prerequisite signal that earth was ready for the FER.

I’m afraid we’re talking apples and oranges here, Ron. On guard, Angus

REINCARNATION SCAFFOLDING

From: ROBERT GUIN

Organization: “Truth should be Lived”

Should we liken reincarnation belief with mental scaffolding? Isn’t it just that? Doesn’t the belief bring some to an

awareness of spiritual reality? And like all belief; sooner or later it must be expanded and sometimes left behind. Haven’t most of us left more primitive belief systems prior to exposure to the Urantia book?

In my view there will usually be some heading toward the belief in reincarnation, some that firmly believe in it and some that have expanded their spiritual belief system. It is all scaffolding that strengthens our walk toward the Father..

Do you think someday we might look back to our lives here on Earth and reminisce that the Urantia book was, without question, the Book of Truth, but, that indeed it was precise scaffolding that stimulated the imagination to reach beyond ourselves?? To find the Father and his will for us...

Love to you all.

On the Matter of Reincarnation by ROBERT CRICKETT

Reincarnation is a fact of life held by millions of people the world over. The people largely responsible for this philosophy’s dissemination, and held in high regard for their knowledge on the subject, are Tibetan and Chinese Mahayana Buddhists, Thai, Burmese, and Sri Lankan Hinayana Buddhists, Chinese Taoists, Indian Hindus, and a seemingly endless array of homegrown pantheistic Asian offshoots which vary from town to town. It is from these Asian sources that the idea of reincarnation filtered into Western religious areas of thought. Some of the theory came to us in dribs and drabs, snippets from mainstream religions neatly edited by the evangelist to suit the social climate and his or her spiritual capacity and conditioning.

I have spent time as a monk in Asia and was led through the training steps provided to such a person who is clearly devoted to experientially exploring spiritual realities for the sake of Enlightenment and its freedom from the whole reincarnation package, as well as for the sake of awakening others to the fact of reincarnation, its consequences, philosophy and transcendence. I also am fully committed to the teachings within The URANTIA Book. It may be of some small interest to readers of the 606 Newsletter if I outline some of my own experiences with reincarnation and The URANTIA Book during the course of my spiritual development...hence this article.

Like thousands of Westerners, my first serving of the reincarnation idea came to me from the author of a number of books on Tibetan Buddhism, one Lobsang Rampa.

Lobsang, about whom neither the Dalai Lama nor any others in Tibetan Buddhist ranks know anything at all, claims to have been a Tibetan Buddhist Lama early this century. He died and transferred himself into the body of a Canadian man who was himself about to die. Lobsang still is alive and well in Canada. His books captivated a large Western audience and set many people on the path to believing in reincarnation. His was a case of the delivery to us of a driblet and drabs package and in the light of what "real" Tibetan Lamas teach on reincarnation, Lobsang didn't really do such a terrific job in his presentation of the subject. As a result of exposure to his writings, however, large number of Westerners took up the belief, never researching the idea any further, nor even seriously questioning it.

The common scenario I came across was people who had rejected Christianity here due to their feelings toward the Church's dogmatic approach and its stifling effect upon a virginal spiritual urge eager for the dynamic exploration of new horizons rich in love and nourishment, who had a vacuum to fill. Along came reincarnation, the mystical, the spiritually appealing, the romantic, and...quite naturally ... folks grabbed onto it. Most of us want to fill the vacuum created by a negative with something we construe to be a positive, and many more of us want to believe in anything at all, just so long as it doesn't accord with whatever we've previously rejected.

Lobsang's teachings certainly appealed to me at that time. Reincarnation was innocuous enough, sufficiently radical, and it was buried deep in the bosom of romance itself...the aloof and mystical community of Tibetan sages, renowned for their loving kindness and spiritual expertise. It could be said that when I did trek off to be with these kindly people, my thirst, was for spiritual experience in the company of loving companions and reincarnation just happened to be a part of the deal. I arrived into their midst with ideas about life, death and reincarnation, being largely undeveloped at all. I was open to suggestion, being biased neither one way nor the other very much. I had, however, developed a psychic ability which enabled me to do "Past-life readings" for people ... and seemed to be pretty good at it. I harbored a belief in reincarnation which provided access to the Tibetan community, exposed me to people's inner world and behavioral tendencies, yet it wasn't a belief I would fervently defend ... in past-life readings I had no explanation for the flood of information accredited to past lives. The idea of that information having its origins in actual past-lives seemed good enough at the time ... until I could verify it or find a better explanation for it at some later stage of spiritual development.

My training as a monk has afforded far greater access to

teachings and initiations than laypersons, and consisted of firstly learning the principles by which reincarnation operates. Without reincarnation Buddhism, Hinduism, taoism, Western mystery schools, and the many pantheistic cults of the world are without their "raison 'd 'etre." Without reincarnation there is no philosophically debatable foundation for religious experience, nor for explanation of the human condition. Without reincarnation these religious approaches would be reduced to evangelizing spirituality for its own sake alone ... and so very much of the potency of such an approach depends upon well developed faith, an attribute few of us enjoy until we have survived a great deal of soul-searching and experiential trauma.

If you want to question this, notice how you, yourself appeal to someone as you evangelize. Find out what you use as leverage to convince the person to begin to draw on God in daily life. Somewhere along the line you'll use reasons such as: "Jesus died for you", "What will happen to you after you die?", "How do you account for synchronous events ... karma?", and so on. You use your philosophy to encourage people to "get into God"... as if God isn't sufficient reason alone. The kid's reply to: "Why do you believe in God"... "Because" ... "Because why?" ... "Just because" ... is God for God's sake rather than God for reincarnation's sake or some other philosophical argument's sake.

And so I was taught the foundation of Buddhism, the very reason for being faithful and clearing my way for the enlightenment event and its overturning of the self-identity as it generated Nirvana, the foundation of reincarnation. The principles I was taught agree totally with those found in all the various sects of Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Western mystery schools and those presented to people through mediums and psychics in general here in the West. The principles, surprisingly largely ill-defined or unknown to most Westerners who believe in reincarnation, are as follows:

1. SELF IS REAL and self-generating. Everything else, the universes filled with life forms, the cities filled with people, the landscape filled with trees and plants and lakes and seas, your body and feelings and mind and its thoughts, what you see and hear and feel and taste and smell ... all these are unreal and not self-generating, they are selfless.

Our feeling of selfhood and even our life and death itself are recognized by the enlightened mind to be nothing more than names and appearance ... the substance of which remains in Self ... the appearance of which, however, are at no time actually self-existent things. It's a bit like peeling

away the leaves of an onion in search of the core being of the onion and, of course, finding no such thing.

2. TRUE REALITY is said to be a condition in which you, as Self, are like an immense mirror which has no individual sense of self that can be set apart from anything. And that ALL phenomena that make up life are empty reflections which appear and disappear in the mirror of Self. As Self you know you are, as such; it's just that you are not bound by the limitations arising from behaving according to the understanding that you are your body or your mind. Instead, you encompass them; body and mind exist within you rather than the other way around.

3. MAN'S ERROR is the belief that we are a self-feeling called "I" and that we behave according to the limitations and capacity for truth that our own particular "I" has. Enlightenment, the goal of all reincarnation theories, delivers man from this deluded notion and consequently that notion's limitations. The basis for these limitations is fear, greed, anger and ignorance of Self.

4. KARMA, meaning cause and effect, is the act of generating changes. It can be good karma, bad karma or neutral karma. The sage transforms his or her behavioral tendencies so as to generate good karma, i.e. set in motion only those things that will return prosperity to himself and all others. The ignorant person is so completely driven by the delusion of believing in personal gain and loss that most karma is bad, i.e. he sets in motion those things which result in his demise and the demise of others. Some reincarnation beliefs hold that over countless lifetimes man becomes ever-increasingly capable of generating good karma. Some, such as is commonly found within primitive Hindu and Buddhist theories, hold that man is no more likely to live one step up the ladder next time around than revert to being a plant or a bug. In fact the latter is more likely.

In reincarnation-based lives, great importance is placed upon generating good karma: Support priests, because they can show you the way out; do kind things for others, so you'll get it back to you in return; make bountiful offerings to gods and your ancestors, just in case they have any sway over what happens to you in this lifetime or the next...and so on. The heart of the belief in reincarnation, as it is experientially taught to monks, is that Self is uncreated (like the thought Adjuster) and that what it is that incarnates over and over again is merely and "I" thought. Due to the belief in a self-existent "I" in one lifetime, those seeds sown are seeds designed to perpetuate the sense of "I". Self is responsible for generating and supporting these causes, it being utterly unmoved by any of the going-on, which the "I" considers are real. Self has

the perspective blatantly obvious and blatantly correct once enlightenment occurs, that everything is OK and could never be anything but OK. Self doesn't acknowledge any perspective that the "I" has... so the "I" can be scared to death, craving personal survival, fearful of extinction and busy generating all the causes that reinforce the "I", and Self doesn't give a hoot! Self is to all intents and purposes God. God the creator; God the supporter; God the lover; God who is free from the clamor for mortal strivings; God who is fully aware of what is transient and fleeting and what is eternal and enduring ... and who is quite OK about letting the transient, the "flash of lightning in the dark night," be true to its nature; and God who has no impulse to muster a neatly edited selection of some of the possible phenomena around and call it "I" and belief in it to the complete forgetfulness of the reality, security, enormity and value in being Him Self. Only we, it seems, are that silly.

Reincarnation theories consider that we have been running the "I" trip forever since an eternal past. There was no beginning to our adoption of the "I" which is responsible for reincarnating time and time again. One of the spiritual exercises designed to generate the loving kindness which will enable the "I" to loosen its grip and thus be more inclined to awaken to Self, is the "Truth" that since we have lived forever, and in every conceivable form imaginable, every single thing has at some stage been our mother, our father, our child, our friend, our enemy. We have deeply loved absolutely everyone at some stage, and at another stage hated them with a vile evil to the extent that we delighted in chopping them into little pieces. If everyone has been our mother then, it's only right to love everyone now with the love we have for our mother, or at least with the love of a mother. Yet I've come across only a few monks who live like this and next to no lay people, Asian or Western, who strongly adhere to the belief in their own reincarnation. Most reincarnationists have the rather unnerving attitude that they can relax and take it easy during life because, when it's all said and done, Enlightenment is seemingly so impossible to attain, and life really isn't all that bad, and ultimately it's in the hands of something presumed to be spiritual and presumed to be leading the person gradually into greater proximity to the enlightenment...salvation...event, which according to the actual premise for reincarnation itself, is absolute nonsense. The person merely lives with a belief that is fashionable, or comfortable, or romantic, or sufficiently mystical to appease a part of the inner-life cravings ... without ever seriously researching the belief itself, a belief that when actually understood in its fullness, is horrific and sufficiently repulsive to make a person crave enlightenment with such an unwavering determination and such a spiritual ferocity as to bring about radical shifts in their

self-identity. One of the common traits most Western reincarnationists share however is the almost total lack of drive to exit the reincarnation cycle...they have no spiritual practise in their daily lives to speak of at all. Day after day, month after month, and year after year, they go on letting their precious time here slip away fruitlessly without ever coming to anything very substantial that is capable of ACTING on their firmly held belief in reincarnation...except perhaps a repertoire of other possible explanations they reject with a vehemence.

Most Westerners I have met who harbor a belief in reincarnation pale into insignificance when compared to the true sages who share the same belief, yet who have turned their lives around and now veritably ooze the unfathomably rich self assurance, love, and faith of a True Spirit. And ironically, it is these ones, humble in their perfection, ordinary in their, by human standards, overwhelming spiritual self-identity and potency, who begin to doubt the whole reincarnation hypothesis. In a sense it is only perspective gained subsequent to enlightenment that enables a person to draw on sufficiently spiritual resources to know reincarnation fully at all. And if you're enlightened, reincarnation is, as promised in the reincarnation teaching itself the first thing to get tossed out! To the enlightened person it is blatantly obvious that no one was ever reincarnating, no one was ever born, no one could die. Life and death are merely empty names, names which have been ascribed to mirage-like goings-on possessing the substance of a dream or a fantasy. "I" never was real. "I" never did all those things that comprised daily life. "I" never did have all that suffering, all that confusion, all that desperation. It all took place within Self...unmoving, eternal, self-generating, divinely wise and compassionate Self.

Ha! The joke of it all. When your self-identity returns to awaken from "I" to Self, you can't help but laugh at yourself for having been so silly as to endorse your "I" as host of your life. And it is then only a matter of conditioning that determines the type of explanations the enlightened person uses to teach others. Some still employ the reincarnation nirvana concepts, some use only the enlightened perspective (such as zen Buddhism often does), some revert to "this is your first life"...and so on. It's only a matter of conditioning and who it is you're teaching that determines your explanations, because when you're living from Self the daily life reality is so extraordinarily different from that lived with an "I" host that all are seen to be more often than not a cause for greater confusion in the minds of those listening.

So, in a nutshell, that's pretty much what reincarnation is about as it's taught at the source, by those "in the know" whose spiritual lives depend on it utterly...and there is no

truer origin to derive such teachings from here on this planet.

In the course of my training then, I was taught all the above and more experientially ... I experienced each exercise in the teachings. And I quite fancied it too. I was taken through the Bardo, the post death event. I was taught how to willfully die how to willfully be born again. I was taught how to experience the "truth" that Self is host and "I" is just a fleeting guest in my mind. I was taught how my delusions about "I" wreaked unimaginable havoc in my life and the lives of everyone else...and I experienced it. I was taught the "truth" about reincarnation, the "truth" about our human condition...and I believe it.

Well, I could prove it. I had experienced absolutely everything, except enlightenment, involved in reincarnation's premises. Reincarnation was an obvious fact of life to me because I could recount any of the infinite past lives I had already lived, as well as recount those in any other person for them. And that's pretty convincing.

But then along came The URANTIA Book....

ANNOUNCING **SPIRITFEST '99**

6th Annual California Gathering of the Teaching Mission July 23, 24, 25

California Spiritfest will be held this year at a Buddhist retreat center among the beautiful redwoods of the Santa Cruz mountains near Watsonville. There is a variety of accommodations ranging from most comfortable to more rustic that can be suited to individuals' needs and budgets. Cabin spaces are \$98 per person, including food for the weekend.

We believe the most important aspects of these gatherings are the increasing recognition of unity in our spiritual community and the sharing that allows us to know one another better as individuals. The more we know and strive to understand one another, the easier it is for us to love one another as Michael and the Father love each one of us.

For more information, please contact Allen and Julianna Rice at 53 Chinese Wall Road, Oroville, CA 95966; phone: (530) 589-3243; e-mail: ricedraft@jps.net. Look us up at www.spiritfest.com.

STRONGER LIGHTS

(A Song to Father)

by Jim Cleveland

I know, Father, you've heard it o'er ages before.
How we love you and pledge you our faith
How we sure want your helping to make it each
day
Thinking life is a God-fearing race.
Then you see all the new starts fall victim
to habits of malice and pride
and we don't live the love that we promised you
It must come from deeper inside.

(CHORUS-1)

That's why

I-i-i really love you.

I love you from deep in my soul.

I really love you.

I'll love you as seasons unfold.

I really love you.

Your spark in my heart lights the way.

I really love you.

While our lights they grow stronger each day.

Well they say, Father, sometimes you get angry
and smite all the sinners in wrath

But when I go inside and ask you
your love leads me back to the path
that sees you, my Father, as pure love
No anger have ever you cast.
You'll love us the same if we fear you,
but that is not what you have asked.

When we fall down with our feet made of clay
regressing to doubting and fear
We can come to you, Father, right here deep
inside
You brighten our vision to clear
that we're all just children of the One Holy One
who shares as a Father so near
and if we will only make quiet time with you
(pause-spoken) and listen
all of our doubts disappear.

(CHORUS-2)

And that's why ...

I really love you.

I love you from deep in my soul.

I really love you.

and love grows when given so bold.

I really love you.

Your spark in my heart lights the way.

I really love you.

And our lights they grow stronger each day.

JEST THE FACTS

A friend was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the preacher was standing at the door as he always was to shake hands. He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. The Pastor said to him, "You need to join the Army of the Lord!" My friend replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Pastor." Pastor questioned, "How come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?" He whispered back, "I'm in the secret service."

A young boy had just gotten his driving permit. He asked his father, who was a minister, if they could discuss the use of the car. His father took him to his study and said to him, "I'll make a deal with you. You bring your grades up, study your Bible a little

and get your hair cut and we'll talk about it."

After about a month the boy came back and again asked his father if they could discuss use of the car. They again went to the father's study where his father said, "Son, I've been real proud of you. You have brought your grades up, you've studied your Bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut!" The young man waited a moment and replied, "You know Dad, I've been thinking about that. You know, Samson had long hair, Moses had long hair, Noah had long hair, and even Jesus had long hair..."

To which his father replied, "Yes, and they walked every where they went!"

EXPLORER ENDNOTES

So there's another issue, no. 5. We hope you've enjoyed these continued explorations of planetary spirituality.

It says Autumn 1998, and that makes it pretty late by any standard. We must've lost Autumn somewhere during the last snowstorm here in Ohio. But much has happened in life to delay this issue. Now, we have more resources than ever to spread the good news of spiritual renaissance in the world.

Much of our concentration recently has been on the website: <http://www.lightandlife.com>

We've added a huge collection of Teaching Mission transcripts from around the US, as well as lessons and stories from Bakim of the Celestial Artisans. And we've placed all four previous issues of the Light and Life Journal online, complete with an Adobe plug-in that allows you to download and print them. They are between 55 and 60 pages each.

If you like the Journal, we hope you'll share it with everybody. And send us some inspired content.

As late as this issue is, it's good that we're already planning the next one, It'll have a Teaching Mission theme, exploring the history and progress of groups who are receiving and transmitting celestial teachers, and edited primarily by Marty Greenhut, our new associate editor.

The possibility of such has raised many a rousing argument on email in recent months, and we'll be publishing some of these narratives soon as well. What greater issue could we explore, after all, than whether or not spiritual contact is possible, and is anyone doing it? Or is there a multitude of people doing it, as it seems, or as it is claimed?

To be honest, this whole plethora of spiritual movement from these many perspectives is sometimes a little disconcerting to me personally. Are many of them filled with damaging error that will lead us astray? Are they are saying the same things, only differently? Who is delusional and who is inspired? Is it all just the swirling mix of human perspectives reacting to enhanced spiritual energies, and so it's all okay?

Well, so these are the reasons for the Light and Life Journal. To explore. And, like no other publication, based on the Urantia Papers revelation.

As for whether celestial contact is possible, of course it is.

I could not have deducted this logically because what we don't know about energy circuitry and the administration of the universes would fill encyclopedias. But I have experienced it. Spiritual circuitry has been enhanced and expanded. The Universal Father has heard our suffering and has, once again, sent to us a mission of service.

And if Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, was a mission of hope, this new millennium will see a mission of redemption -- what we have hoped for.

Of course, naysayers will scream from church pulpits and email lists at how God's Word, their particular revered scripture, is being blasphemed in the years ahead, by cults of mysticism. Some goodhearted spiritual explorers will be troubled by this.

I truly don't think there's great cause for worry. If we exhibit pure hearts and seek Truth, Beauty and Goodness, we will be magnets to the masses. For the movement is truly from within, inside the hearts, minds and spirits of each individual Child of God. People will be moved to Grace from the Power Within. When they are moved in our direction, we can be prepared to give them loving kindnesses.

There has never been a greater time in history for spiritual service. These tumultuous, fast-moving, quickening historical times are stirring a great spiritual restlessness, a thirst for Living Water that must be quenched.

And in faith I know that it will be if we strive with all our skills and limitations to live in God's love.

Then we will not be just a witness to these changing times. We can help to mold them in the spirit by displaying the Fruits of the Spirit in our daily lives, and to be open to the spiritual teaching that is available to anyone who will ask for a spiritual teacher.

All of this belief is why we've devoted so much space to the words of these teachers. In this issue, you will hear many voices in many locations and they all, compatibly, embrace the same Truths of the Heart. Their lessons in this issue center on our Ascension, our Transformation, our quest for Perfection as a masterpiece of God.

Got some commentary about any of the issues we explore? Please send it along. Poetry, lyricals, prayers and inspirational too. Coming issues are already underway. (:

Love,Light,Life and a Li'l Levity Jim