



JOURNAL

Evolution of the Trinity Concept

JOHN ZAVALA, JR.
USA

In his mind Islamic tradition has taught him there is no such thing as the Trinity...

AMUSLIM FRIEND OF MINE CONTESTED the absence of any clearer teaching regarding the Trinity in the Bible and it prompted me to investigate. In his mind Islamic tradition has taught him there is no such thing as the Trinity for the particular Quranic translation he studies teaches him so. Though I have perused the same translation I recognize that his belief is predicated more on the translator and not the Quran itself. Be it as it may it is of no consequence, because in my experience the greater population of Islam likewise fails to grasp the Trinity idea, here is the reason why.

Pantheism is monotheism in the making.

Studying Islamic history reveals that their monotheistic zeal for the one God Allah so eclipsed the Trinitarian teachings of sixth century Christian missionaries that though their efforts to eradicate these doctrines, which were perceived as threatening to their ideology, ultimately created an antagonism effect against the three in one idea. Notwithstanding this conflict, the initial rejection of Trinitarianism should not at all be surprising considering the metamorphoses of the god concept traversing a hermeneutic paradigm of polytheism, henotheism and eventually leading into an amalgamated monotheism.

In my friends' affectionate challenge to me I was reminded that even the Hebrews of the Old Testament were one time polytheists and having gone through the struggles of henotheism became monotheistic zealots not unlike the Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula. As time passed the Hebrew people came and went with each



Paradise Trinity image

successive generation strengthening this monotheism and bequeathing on to the next this same zealotry.

During the bestowal life of Jesus Christ the Levantine Jews thus *"could not reconcile the Trinitarian concept with their established monotheistic belief in the One Lord the God of Israel"* [Paper 104: page 1144: 5.5] with the teachings he revealed. These teachings in reference were primarily universal in constitution, such as the teachings of the kingdom and the Fatherhood of God / brotherhood of man concept. This latter teaching in particular, explains the prejudices ever-present in monotheism today, the same kind of prejudice early held by the apostles ▶

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Greetings fellow *Journal* readers,

IN THIS EDITION OF THE *Journal* for 2015/2016 we have five remarkable articles on the perspectives of faith to assist us in rounding out 2015 and begin anew 2016 from a global perspective.

Our first edifying piece “**The Evolution of the Trinity Concept**” is from second time contributor John Zavala, Jr., USA. John clearly outlines how the idea of the Trinity concept had such a difficult time being understood and accepted by the Muslim belief system in the past and today. A conversation with his friend initiated this illuminating study, and hopefully his words will provide a little insight and perhaps some reception to this revelation. *Studying Islamic history reveals that their monotheistic zeal for the one God Allah so eclipsed the Trinitarian teachings of 6th century Christian missionaries that though their efforts to eradicate these doctrines, which were perceived as threatening to their ideology, ultimately created an antagonism effect against the three in one idea.*

“**The Eternal Quest**,” our second article is from Guy Perron, Canada. It is an intricate report on his experience at the sixth World Parliament of Religions held in Salt Lake City Utah in 2015. *So, here we are, 10,000 religionists from more than 80 countries and 50 different faith paths gathered for this extra-ordinary event, the sixth Parliament of World Religions, held in Salt Lake City, Utah for five days, from October 15 to 19 for. The first Parliament which is now recognized as the occasion of the birth of formal interreligious dialogue worldwide was held in 1893 in Chicago; it was the brainchild of the Swedenborgian layman and judge Charles C. Bonney.*

Guy’s recounting of this spiritual conclave should encourage anyone who can make the trip to get to the next one. *After this experience, is there within me a feeling that I had a foretaste of the Mansion Worlds? Well, I have never been there but if I reflect on the Parliament and combined it to what we are told will happen on the first two Mansion Worlds where many physical and intellectual elements will be rectified, I would say most likely.*

Our third contributor, Michael Hanian, Russia, shares with us a presentation he made at the last UAI conference in 2015 entitled, “**Cultivating Mind: Choosing the Right Tool; A personal account of faith as a tool of mind cultivation.**” In this presentation Michael recalls his decision ...to read The Urantia Book and allow it to bear fruit in his life. He also discovered what I feel is one of the most incredible revelations regarding creativity. *Being a composer, I found the idea of creativity to be the most appealing to me. For creativity is ultimately calling into being a new reality. And that is something that makes us, if not creators, then at least co-creators.* In this presentation he awards us with his living words of faith over fear and—leaves us with words to live by, *it is an essential part of our development, both as mortals and in eternity, to build strong character and unshakable faith.*

Bart Gibbons, USA, is next and in his “**With Respect to Adversity**” he asks the question all of us at one time or another has wanted an answer to *How do the teachings help us respond when we are shattered by devastating and unexpected tragedy or our own misguided efforts causes suffering and despair in our daily lives?* Bart give us examples on how to deal with just about everything

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this world can throw at us, one of my favorites—and one that I’ve become familiar with is *Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.* Will Rogers. Ok, that one was from Will Rogers, but second in line, which totally made my day is ... *The career of a God-seeking man may prove to be a great success in the light of eternity, even though the whole temporal-life enterprise may appear as an overwhelming failure, provided each life failure yielded the culture of wisdom and spirit achievement.* [Paper 160:4:16, page 1780:2] Thanks Bart!

Our Final article to send you into 2016 with hope, happiness and faith, from Australia, is part two of Verner Verass’ “**The Door is Open, Let Whosoever Will, Come.**” Beginning with the consummate invitation *he extends his welcome to each of us to accept the gift of eternal life and the ever increasing capacity for joy of existence...true adventure!* Who can say no to the adventure of eternal life? Utilizing the encouraging words of Jesus, Vern convinces us all to embrace the ticket of faith, that *To follow Jesus is to believe not merely in him but in the father who sent him. The person who sees Jesus sees the Father. A promise of life in abundance for “whosoever will.”*

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Evolution of the Trinity Concept cont. from page 1

in Jesus' day. Though having the advantage of researching *The Urantia Book* it isn't difficult to deduce the fact that the Lord went to great lengths to facilitate comprehension on behalf of them. Being so nurtured in their dominating concept of Yahweh the apostles often found themselves perplexed with the words of the master and defaulted to their philosophic positions of traditions when they could not reasonably grasp an adequate understanding. Embryonic Christianity inherited the same declination which was inevitably strengthened through the writings of the New Testament primarily from the pen of Paul.

When the Jesusonian evangels therefore penetrated the desert bringing the story of the risen Christ as the second person of a trinity, a concept which according to *The Urantia Book* "*erred in fact though particularly true with respect to spiritual relationships*" [Paper 104:1 page 1145:1.4] they unknowingly accentuated the evolving God concept among proto Islamics. The desert people were living on the eve of a great day of religious advancement regarding their comprehension of deity. This Bedouin community was on the latter end of experiencing the time honored process of evolving all of their polytheistic deities into one unified (theoretical) entity, an experience slowly traversed by the Hebrews previously.

In a primitive Religious Society ...*polytheism is a relative unification of evolving concept of Deity; polytheism monotheism in the making...* [Paper 5 :4.2 page 67:0] it is from this broad perspective that explains why my friend contests the presence of the Trinity in the *Bible*. The romantic struggle of love between man and God as written in the Testaments is a story of a monotheistic betrothal, not a story of a Trinitarian co-op. A narrative about a trinity is relatively absent from the Scriptures albeit I counter that the presence of the Trinity is revealed through those indivisible elements that made monotheism possible.

Notwithstanding, the Hebrews did sustain at least a vague concept of the Trinity and though the concept never became elaborate in their theology, it began to solidify once they deanthropomorphised their monotheism, something the Arabian Bedouin never had chance to experience.

The Meccan rejection

Some Islamic theologians teach that it was Jewish theology coupled with the later arriving Christian teachings that made Islam radically monotheistic. I tend to disagree though it is true that Judeo Christian teachings influenced the birth character of Islam to no small degree, it is hardly accurate to say that the influence thereof was the cause of Islamic radicalism. Furthermore it would be a far reach to lay the responsibility of Muslim extremism at the feet of a Jew or a Christian!

Instead, my research leads me to believe that Mohammad founded the Muslim faith as a philosophic protest against all the social demands of the day, which, when recalling the sixth century history, were derived

from multiple sources. Again it may be true that Judaic and Christian methods of proselytizing may have been a bit austere albeit the social collateral requirements of Zoroastrianism and Mithraism were equally as strict. Second, Muhammad's motivation was aggravated by the fact of the inconsistency and incoherency of the polytheistic tendencies of his own people.

Now here's the crux. Foreign religious groups like Christianity and Mithraism in and by themselves had a less than moderate influence in the rise of radical Islamic monotheism. So too was the impact of the religious vagrancy of the Bedouins insignificant. In retrospect, today, **the aggregate condition** that overwhelmingly matured its birth, a condition which traumatized the transition process of a fading polytheism (proto Islam) to a sublime monotheism (embryonic Islam). At least, that would have been the normal advance of things if established religions of the day nurtured, instead of attempting to conform (impose) new spiritual movements like Islam.

...Judeo Christian teachings influenced the birth character of Islam to no small degree...



The Urantia Book is the third presentation of the Trinity to mankind

Given sufficient time, monotheism will evolve on its own when left relatively unmolested or "*as a philosophic protest against the inconsistency of polytheism*" [Paper 104:2 page 1145] as is demonstrated in the experience of the Old Testament peoples. To glean from their experience their hermeneutic traversal from polytheism to monotheism was a gradual conceptual development, being sustained from time to time by the patriotic revivals by those devoted to Yahweh "*the one God of final and supreme value... The Lord God of Israel.*" [Paper 96.1, page 1052].

Nevertheless, passing the monotheistic torch from generation to generation wasn't all a smooth run. The progress of the Hebraic concept was constantly inhibited, and thus retrogressed at times by inevitable repercussions do to cultural and tribal impingement. One such impingement was the idea of the jealous God. Indeed, Moses may have taught this but "*No prophet or religious teacher from*

Machiventa to the time of Jesus attained the high concept of God that Isaiah the second who proclaimed during those days of captivity" [Paper 97:5, page 1068] and who punctuated the fact that God is all powerful, a loving father, a God of all the peoples.

It is observable that when two cultures begin to intermix, whether by political imaginations or religious ones, the less evolved can assimilate only so much from the greater, even if the greater presents their knowledge ready made for them. Accordingly, the depths of assimilation

Had the birthing of the Islamic concept of Allah been given enough time to develop in the hearts of the Mohammedans, the preaching of Jesus Christ as a second person and Deity wouldn't have been such a direct threat to the Muslim faith.

by the lessor can be measured by that "...which is reasonably consistent and compatible with its current evolutionary status, plus it's genius for adaptation." [Paper 92:2.5 page 105] Suffice it to say the proto Islamic culture, though ready to usher in a glorious monotheistic era did so; yet because of the unusual number of attributing factors, including the absence of any kind of spiritual fostering by the more mature religions, the new concept of one God was susceptible to the frailties of new faith. Had the birthing of the Islamic concept of Allah been given enough

time to develop in the hearts of the Mohammedans, the preaching of Jesus Christ as a second person of Deity wouldn't have been such a direct threat to the Muslim faith. The Meccan rejection wasn't against the Lord per se, but in the infantile Islamic mind it was against the idea of one God, who was, as it were, jealous.

In as much as monotheism arises as a protest against the inconsistency of polytheism, an inevitable repercussion of its normal evolutionary development, Trinitarianism likewise develops out of "the impossibility of conceiving the oneness of a deanthropomorphized solitary Deity of unrelated unervise significance." [Paper 104:2 page 1145:3.2] Notwithstanding, Trinitarianism never had a chance in the days of Mohammed for reasons as discussed. To sum up then, the Mohammedans just could not reconcile their new monotheistic concept manifesting in three channels of eternal nature in contradistinction from distinguishing three gods as one. "It is always difficult for an emerging monotheism to tolerate Trinitarianism when confronted by Polytheism" [Paper 104: page 1144: 5.5] *The Urantia Book* suggests that the Trinity idea best takes hold when there is a firm monotheistic tradition coupled with some degree of doctrinal elasticity as seen in the birth of Christianity, and this, within the Hebraic realms of Judaism. To be sure, let us briefly recount the evolution of the god concept among the Hebrews.

The Concept of Elohim

As man has been known to worship deity through a variety of pantheistic organizations of natural mediums such as stones, mountains, plants and trees, this worship evolved up to animals, elements and the heavens consummating in man. From the rocks Jacob used as pillows, the volcano in Sinai, the trees of Israel's apostasy, the urge to worship a monotheistic God was fostered in Hebrew culture until the concept of God as father was born. Over this

long stretch of time, monotheism slowly solidified in the Hebraic mind and through consecutive eras their lesser ideas of deity were henotheistically subordinated to a greater concept. The Hebrews, beginning with the family of Abraham, "long believed in the existence of other gods other than Yahweh, but they increasingly held that these foreign deities were subordinate to Yahweh." [Paper 96:1 page 1054.4.2].

It was all but inevitable that, as the Hebrews advanced in culture, the evolution of their way of life and religious viewpoints "...demanded a more or less complete change in the character of their monotheistic conception of the nature of their God, Yahweh." [Paper 96:6 page 1059:2.4]. Furthermore as their monotheistic comprehension became replete, a greater conception would become necessary to account for all the deity activities outside the immediate rooms of their understanding (the unrelated universe significances). Thus the idea of the Trinity actualized in Hebrew theology. I surmise that all this evolutionary scaffolding was directly repercussive of this same Trinity who, as mentioned, had existence long before man possessed any worship coherency.

Nevertheless, it was due to the unfortunate circumstances within the Kingdom of Israel, their inter-racial prejudices and political differences that prevented the concept of Trinitarianism to become widespread. In fact, it wasn't until the Babylonian captivity that Trinitarianism had any real and significant incorporation in Hebrew theology. That was because the Jews were induced to enlarge their monotheistic concepts. It is not tragic happenstance that the Jewish exile broadened the Jewish mind in both good and not-so-good ways. Concisely to the point, the Jews felt that, in order for their nation to ultimately survive, if "...their ideologies were to prevail" [Paper 87:9 page 1075.3.3] they would have to turn their attention to the painstaking effort of indoctrinating the world of the Gentiles about the "God of Gods."

Thus, Hebraic monotheism reached a level of elasticity where it could no longer maintain its theological integrity bespeaking of a national deity, as it was to be mobilized and proselytized to all nations. The concept of Yahweh, by necessity had to be expanded, and so the Jews turned to their concept of Elohim, which, up to that time, had not yet been fully taught and even less understood.

The postulate of Elohim, a three-fold manifestation of Yahweh—lingered in and out of Hebrew consciousness since the days of Abraham where, in Christian theology, it or the teachings are suggested to have been bestowed upon him either by Melchizedek or through Melchizedek having its origin during the time of Adam. As students of *The Urantia Book*, we know that a Trinitarian concept of monotheism was first revealed during the era of Dalmatia and was reintroduced during Adam's administration. In any case, the idea of a threefold Deity co-op is a level of intellectual and spiritual comprehension that is not entirely obtained through evolutionary methods like henotheism. Though God may be ONE, and this truth was clear in Adam's mind, it hasn't always been so clear

in the non-divisible minds of the rest of us. Indivisibility remains a rough gem to polish.

Yet the Jews were determined to unify the differentiating characteristics indicative of the effort to expand their monotheism, and these efforts should be praised. For in their desperate attempt to survive, they little realized that they were inadvertently returning to Adam's concept of an exalted anthropomorphism; that is, a son of God incidentally prepped the podium for the same Son to teach of the universality of a monotheistic deity, or a creator father. Hence Elohim was the Jewish attempt to theologize the supernal characteristics of Yahweh, and given the level of the cultural civilization of the day, which was in chains, they did an excellent job. Give them 'kudos.'

However, because the Jews became overly engrossed with the prerogatives of the priesthood upon the return from captivity, Elohim remained staged throughout the Hellenization age. For more than 300 years, the doctrine of the Trinity remained shelved in the Hebrew mind. Yet the advance in monotheism was made, and the world was ready to take it to the next level.

Equipped with *The Urantia Book*, the study of Hebrew monotheism in the *Old Testament* is perhaps the best example of the evolving God concept in the world. Their philosophic transition from polytheism to monotheism represents as a whole, the necessary requisite to the further, global, revelation of God. The Hebrew example illustrates the "...evolutionary link between a religion of evolution and religion of Revelation;" [Paper 92:6 page 1011:4.2] which is crucial to the understanding in the 21st century because the big religions of the world teeter on the precipice of this link.

A Planetary Father

To the Jews of Jesus' day, Elohim was denotive of the God of Gods while Yahweh was the God of Israel. It would be helpful to bear in mind that generally speaking, these two are one and the same. Only in theology do they grammatically differentiate. Now, all my religious experience teaches me that the Lord, then even now, predicated his entire ministry on the Elohim tenant, even though the New Testament doesn't specify the master systematically instructing the apostles on the Trinity. To elucidate my hypothesis, allow me to point out that, according to *The Urantia Book*, Jesus often spoke of Elohim when not directly quoting the Torah (i.e. the Scriptures), which indicated his efforts to extend the Jewish concept of Yahweh from a deified racial father (of Israel) to the idea of a father God of all races of men. This had been an undeveloped Jewish construct having its genesis some four centuries previous. Nevertheless there were some unforeseen implications of this ideal in the Jewish mind and they undoubtedly would forever change the course of their history.

Even though Jesus exalted Israel's Yahweh to be the world's Father God it proved to be too much for the Jews, even though the concepts had already found their way into the Scriptures. The prejudice's mentioned earlier really become clear at this point. At that time the Jewish national ego was excessively engrossed in a struggle of determination, "... although under the Roman suzerainty enjoyed a considerable degree of self-government..." [Paper 121:7, page 1334:1] it was more or less religious not political.

The concept of the Trinity is quintessentially revealed throughout the Bible in those lives lived in God as sons and through the Son.

The Lord's concept of Elohim was not to their liking for they envisioned Yahweh to be the God of all nations albeit they desired him to remain politically Jewish. This ideology was underwritten throughout their theology. The fact that the master, being Jewish himself, but not conforming to Jewish political thought, promulgated a global concept of Yahweh that seemed to preclude the assumption which could exclude the pivotal role of the interpretation of the prophet Isaiah saying "inherit the heathen." Thus by Jewish reckoning, they projected themselves as having to share Yahweh on equal terms with these same heathens, and of course, their ritualism and legalism. Otherwise stated, their traditionalistic inertia would just not accommodate that concession.

In the aftermath of the crucifixion, when Christianity began to plow the hearts of men, the heralds of the kingdom took with them the seeds of understanding regarding the Trinity; consisting of God, His Word, and His wisdom. In teaching a variation, the Apostle Paul expressed it as "... the Father, the Son, and spirit." [Paper 104, page 1144] Whatever paradigm was employed by these early Christians, one thing was absolutely clear: his emphatic life declaration of his oneness with the Father, the Trinity demonstrated by the Lord was that "...the Father sent him into the world to reveal their combined natures and to show forth their conjoint work." [Paper 169:4, page 1855-56] And herein lies the clarity for my friends' argument. The concept of the Trinity is quintessentially revealed throughout the *Bible* in those lives lived in God as sons and through the Son.

As a son, I learn about God from Jesus, by observing the divinity in his life. I augment this observation through the study of his teachings; teachings in my personal life and by the teachings I disseminate from *The Urantia Book*. From his examples, I can grasp the highest concept of God as I am able, a concept which represents the measure of my capacity to perceive the reality of the infinite paradise Trinity. Though I cannot hope to totally comprehend such a reality, I can however, grasp a miniscule glimpse through its focalization in the personality of the master of my soul, Jesus Christ. Ergo, the concept of the Trinity effectively provides for the full expression and perfect revelation of the eternal nature of deity. ■

The Eternal Quest

The Sixth Parliament of World Religions

Claiming the heart of our humanity ...through loving kindness.

GUY PERRON
Canada

A FEW MONTHS AGO, A SEED WAS PLANTED in my soul by a friend when he asked me if I was going to the Parliament of World Religions. *"You couldn't miss such an opportunity to have a foretaste of what the Mansion World can be, at least the first one."* Already on the trip from Montreal to San Francisco and then to Salt Lake city, most people that I interacted with were on a quest, either with a swami, a spiritual teacher, with an organized religious group like Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism, Protestantism, or even with God himself. Some were even affirming that they were studying a Revelation! Barbara from Santa Barbara who was sitting beside me on the flight from San Francisco was so enthused about the upcoming event. She has been on a spiritual quest for 40 years embracing so many different teachings and was now teaching meditation classes, her way of giving back what she so abundantly received, as she said. In the lobby of the hotel, I met Karen, a flight attendant from Delta Airlines who flew that same day from Amsterdam; she told me that the flight was filled with people coming to the Parliament and that it was her best flight ever, after 25 years in the business. *"People were so kind, gentle, loving and sweet, all of them. Wouldn't it be nice if all the world would be like that?"*

In the union of our souls, all point of views are valuable...

So, here we are, 10,000 religionists from more than 80 countries and 50 different faith paths gathered for this extra-ordinary event, the sixth Parliament of World Religions, held in Salt Lake City, Utah for five days, from October 15 to 19–2015. The first Parliament which is now recognized as the occasion of the birth of formal interreligious dialogue worldwide was held in 1893 in Chicago; it was the brainchild of the Swedenborgian layman and judge Charles C. Bonney. One hundred-years later, over 8,000 people came to Chicago for the second Parliament in 1993. In 1999, the Parliament reunited the faith people in South Africa and then in Barcelona in 2004 and again in Melbourne in 2009.



Pathways in the quest to find the Father, illustration.

Here is a glimpse of what was proposed to the attendees this year. *"You should attend if you are concerned about war, terrorism, and hatred; if you care for creation and are worried about climate change; if you are troubled by the widening wealth gap and wasteful consumption; if you care for religions and nations working together in harmony for the good of humanity. You will also find: trainings in dialogue, interfaith activism, fundraising, and organizing, World-class religious music, films, exhibits and performances."*

What happened there? How can we give you a good perspective of what people have experienced? Here are a few word symbols that were heard repeatedly over the five days: *"Compassion, God's Love, goodness, loving service, love is the feeling, caring, mother Earth, Universal Father, we are one, we are all connected, inspiring, unity in diversity, we are all part of the Supreme, so many new personalities, new friends, new people to discover, adaptation, interconnectedness, enthused, energized, differences, unfairness, injustice, no, stop it, the world is in chaos, hope, instant recognition, instant friendship, adaptability, war, conflicts, greed, hatred, joy..."*

The best way to give a fair and better perspective of what happened at the Parliament would be to gather many points of view. In the union of our souls, all points of view are valuable and in bringing them together in a collage, we feel that it will help us have a better overview and help each of us mobilize more wisdom. As a popular band was singing many years ago, I just get by with a little from my friends, mainly Urantia Book readers and students.

From Kamala: *One word has touched and anchored my soul throughout the Parliament and continues to have a sounding resonance every day, "Humility." Humility resounded from the soul of so many of the presenters from all over the world. When they spoke, humility and compassionate action stood brilliantly in the light of "Power." When ego showed its face in many ways it was and must be lit up for service to God and Humanity. This*

is what still lives in my heart and soul each day. May I be one of service in this light.

From Fred: *There are as many paths to God as there are people to walk them.*

From Evette: *We are one beautiful family. Brothers and sisters are we!*

From Arlene: *So many people of all faiths actively working on solving our earthly problems in unity with diversity.*

From Susan: *It's inspiring and energizing to know that 9,500 people are basically speaking the same language of the heart and mind. And, that there are probably millions more that could not attend. Love you.*

From Arthur: *The move from secular religion to group awareness of planetary worship of a "One Planet People's."*

From Tommie: *I immediately remembered the profound peace of sharing such an incredible soul-growing experience with so many and vastly-varied, kindred spirits; but, then I envisioned the amazing potential which was begun here, within and through each of us and the collective all of us and I am awed to tears by the power... Much love as we continue in sharing and service.*

From Pato: *The deepest impression I received within my Soul at "The Parliament of World Religions" is that everyone I met and conversed with, desired to live in a world of peace, where they could "openly practice" the Religious Traditions of their choice; "openly profess" the truth that they held closest to their hearts without the fear of being criticized or chastised; and "openly partake" in a loving hug in our joint desire to love and be loved in return.*

From Meredith: *Hope for Light and Life! At the Parliament it seems possible we might get there. The spiritual unity among all those of different faiths was impressive. Lastly the Divine Feminine was rising in Melbourne at the last Parliament but here in Salt Lake she is pounding on the door of established religion and demanding entrance. We women have waited a long time.*

From Jake: *Impression? I have become even more impressed with the marvelous and wonderful diversity of mankind and how, even though there is so much diversity, we should all except and love each other like we were family.*

From Sandra: *The deepest impression I received in my soul from my experience was that there are so many wonderful people in the world, and so much beauty. There is power in numbers. As someone notes quite often when people gather at his house to study The Urantia Book: "When two or more are gathered in my name I'll be there." Well, concerning the Parliament of World's Religions, I was thinking that this is what may happen when nearly 10,000 are 'gathered in my name'." To me, it felt that good. There were many miracles happening—and I know the world is opening up to the Urantia Revelation. Personally for me, I felt blessed to be totally uplifted and carried along*

in spending day and night with my dear friend and mentor, "Le'Ruth. She has so much to offer and share, in terms of knowledge and experience, but also most specifically in terms of showing how truly to love and connect with ALL people; as I walked around with her—she would quickly become caring friends to every person she met (people working in the hotel, people participating on panels, people she met on the street and hallways, etc.).

...I know the world is opening up to the Urantia Revelation.

From Thomas: *Humanity is, indeed, on a march to a great and unrevealed destiny. Attending the Parliament gave me an opportunity to be in a community of ten thousand other humans that have set out on this journey willingly and with great conviction. I am deeply saddened having seen what others have been through dealing with the ravages of war, hate, prejudice, poverty, and every other form of injustice. I am ashamed for my country and its role in creating much of the chaos on the planet. I am humbled when I see the great works others do and the huge sacrifices they have made to help others. The question in my soul is: How can I contribute to the betterment of humankind? How can I intelligently, lovingly and wisely go forth to bring light and truth to the people of a struggling planet? Thank you for an opportunity to reflect on my experience at the Parliament. All the best.*

From Doreen: *I saw the unique beauty in the hearts of so many from around the world. The desire to understand each other searching for our common goals to live in peace and serve one another justly. Then there were some that were truly transformed by the spirit as they spoke with love and soul consciousness sharing their enlightenment with many communities, educational institutions, religious organizations inspiring those who are receptive.*

From Natascha: *Compassion is deeper than a simple feeling or emotion towards others' conditions; it is an educated, full and complex understanding of another's situation. More effort needs to be put into being truly compassionate than I thought prior to this parliament. Thank you :)*

From David: *My deepest impression was the general feeling of friendship, compassion, cooperation and genuine curiosity among the participants. Everyone I met was willing to share their experiences, beliefs and convictions in a loving and peaceful manner. There was a sense of brotherly affection and love throughout the event. It was an honor to be able to share the Revelation with those who were interested and equally enjoyable attending the presentations and visiting the various booths that were available during the Parliament. I'm sure the angels were pleased to see such a blending of joy and spiritual unity on exhibition. In good cheer...*

From Christina: *We took the roof of the building at the Salt Palace Convention Center with Gard, Pato, Moustafa, and Ben Bowler's simultaneous workshops. There were so many people inspired to learn more about The Urantia book that they were buying four at a*

My deepest impression at the 2015 Parliament is substantial evidence affirming truth of the first two sentences in The Urantia Book Foreword...

time at the booth! Each person spoke from their own personal experience. The quality of video created by Richard Jernigan and Pato Banton was so high that it spoke to the creativity The Urantia Book inspires of us. Pamela Chaddock introduced Ben Bowler with Brian McLaren. We had a performance by Pato, where he said everybody that they are each indwelt by a loving fragment of our Father God. Stir it up with sugar! I admire the courage of each of us who attended this event, as we planted many seeds in with fellow believers this feast of faiths, the Parliament of the World's Religions. This will be happening every two years now, they announced yesterday. That means in 2017 we could potentially have 300-500 students of The Urantia Book attend!

From Mark: *My deepest impression at the 2015 Parliament is substantial evidence affirming truth of the first two sentences in The Urantia Book Foreword: "IN THE MINDS of the mortals of Urantia—that being the name of your world — there exists great confusion respecting the meaning of such terms as God, divinity, and deity. Human beings are still more confused and uncertain about the relationships of the divine personalities designated by these numerous appellations." If you would ask people, 'What kind of god is God?' you would get many different answers. The many religions with their ancient traditions so passionately emphasized at the Parliament indicates humanity is far from global unity under one God. People are still worshipping "Mother Earth." People are taught to preserve traditions. I see that as looking backwards for authority and preservation. I sense there is growing interest and desire in caring for people and this will lead to greater desire for unity. I do feel satisfied in seeing we are headed in the right direction, although so slowly! The growing desire for peace, even with different understandings of Divine, may be a driving force to change governments and political activities to eliminate war. The interfaith movement may be the right force in love to change nations. Best regards and blessings for all.*

From Miranda: *I heard a beautiful message repeated by many religious leaders acknowledging that we are all connected through love, through our hearts, and through being one family of humanity...even though our beliefs are different in some ways. I felt so much hope of people being able to unite and work together to effect positive change in the world...hopefully sooner rather than later :)*

From Karen K.: *My spirit was deeply touched by excellent multiple experiences at POWR. I have recommitted my earthly life to more teaching. As an author, researcher, and speaker I can still empower humanity to do good. I have always been interested in commonality rather than differences.*

From Geoff: *The Parliament afforded me an opportunity to experience spiritual unity. Having spent hours in deep, soul-to-soul conference with my brothers*

and sisters was a wonderful experience of celebrating our spirit origin, purpose, and destiny. One such interaction was a heartfelt conversation with a Ba'hai sister who shared with me a desire to seek God's will for how to best function as groups. We both hope that the Parliament will evolve to be a conscious space for religionists to be united in spirit and by spirit.

From Richard: *Belief has attained the level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. A state of mind attains to faith levels only when it actually dominates the mode of living. Faith is a living attribute of genuine personal religious experience. One believes truth, admires beauty, and reverences goodness, but does not worship them; such an attitude of saving faith is centered on God alone, who is all of these personified and infinitely more.*

[Paper 101:8.1, page 1114:5]

Belief is always limiting and binding; faith is expanding and releasing. Belief fixates, faith liberates. But living religious faith is more than the association of noble beliefs; it is more than an exalted system of philosophy; it is a living experience concerned with spiritual meanings, divine ideals, and supreme values; it is God-knowing and man-serving. Beliefs may become group possessions, but faith must be personal. Theologic beliefs can be suggested to a group, but faith can rise up only in the heart of the individual religionist. [Paper 101:8.2, page 1114:6]

From Dave T: *I was greatly inspired by the Parliament, so feel inspired and feel I can be inspiring in this post as well! My deepest impression: I was very moved by the Parliament as a whole, and particularly by the rising tide of the Divine Feminine / engagement with the presence and concerns of Mother Spirit, which was so much more evident than in past Parliaments. Meredith and I attended the Women's Assembly and Plenary together which we experienced as very inspiring and encouraging, and viewed it as a major turning point in "herstory!" The essential interrelatedness of the Parliament's emphasis on women, climate, income inequity, social justice, peace, and spirituality was clearly evident. Whereas the combined presentations made it painfully clear that we have much work to do, and that there is an urgency about addressing these concerns, my hope in the collective "heart of humanity" was renewed. I believe there was a common recognition that the words needed to be followed up by individual and collective action, and that even if only a few thousand of the total attending respond to the numerous calls to action then significant good progress toward light and life will unfold. I also enjoyed having time and some deep or meaningful discussion with many Urantia Book related friends, and some from three other groups/organizations I am associated with. We were glad to see our 18 y.o. daughter Alanna, who flew in from Taiwan (with the aid of a scholarship) and who afterwards*

is heading to India (and then Thailand) all as part of her Global Studies coursework for Long Island University. One favorite moment I remember was walking by someone who was just beaming with love and light and life, as was I at the time, and we seemed to “recognize” each other, (or the One within both of us), although “strangers,” and instead of walking past each other we just mutually turned toward one another and laughingly embraced while greeting each other verbally as “brother” and then walked on our respective ways! I also was pleased that Mer and I were able to conjointly offer our presentation on “Divine Patterns of Male/Female Partnership,” something we both feel is an important contribution to our planetary culture and about which *The Urantia Book* provides a valuable and unique perspective. With love and light and life.

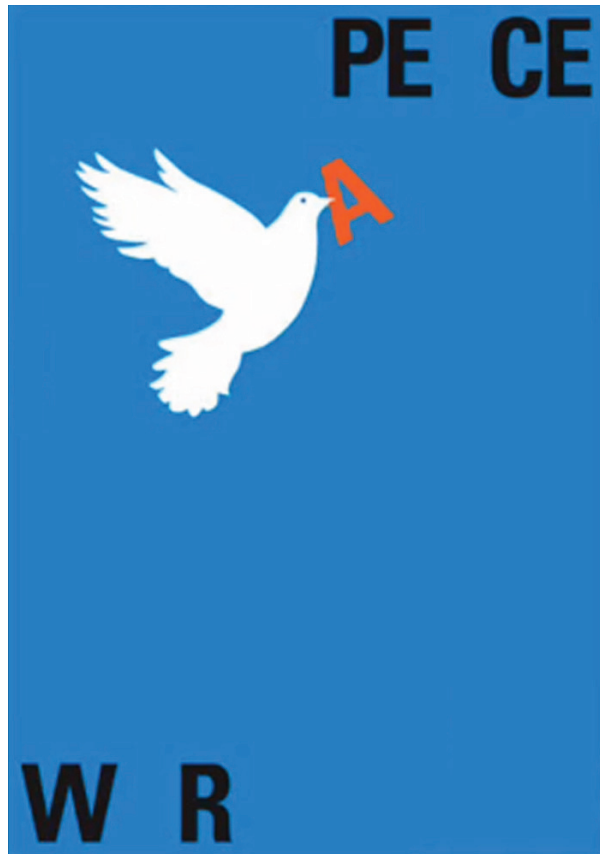
Since sharing our inner life is God-like, divine... thanks for all who have contributed.

As the years passed, this young carpenter of Nazareth increasingly measured every institution of society and every usage of religion by the unvarying test: What does it do for the human soul? does it bring God to man? does it bring man to God? While this youth did not wholly neglect the recreational and social aspects of life, more and more he devoted his time and energies to just two purposes: the care of his family and the preparation to do his Father’s heavenly will on earth. [Paper 126:2.5, page 1388:5]

From studying *The Urantia Book* for many years here are some of the incomparable teachings of Jesus from Part IV. After what Jesus taught us about our personal relationship with our Father and in keeping in mind what the Melchizedek revealed to us on religion, being a personal experience of God, here are a few thoughts that have emerged in my simple ascending mortal mind and some elements I have been reflecting on since the Parliament: a chapter of my/our eternal quest. Are religious groups coming together to get closer to God and His Divine Presence within? Are religionists sharing their individual ways to serve in order that all gain morontial wisdom? Are religionists coming together to feed and nurture their soul? Should organized religions be involved in politics and economy? Can we fit the words ‘parliament’ and ‘religions’ together? What is the task of the individual religionist? What is my task as an individual religionist?

After this experience, is there within me a feeling that I had a foretaste of the Mansion Worlds? Well, I have never been there but if I reflect on the Parliament and combined it to what we are told will happen on the first two Mansion Worlds where many physical and intellectual elements will be rectified, I would say most likely.

Tabamantia, agondonter of finaliter status, who has survived from one of the quarantined spheres involved in the first rebellion ever to take place in the universes of time and space and now sovereign supervisor of the series



of decimal or experimental world, can we call on you to share with us how you feel since we know whereof you speak? In seeing what happened at the Parliament, do you still have the same feeling about our world that you had over 60 years ago?

“Now to you, superiors far above me, I come as one placed in temporary authority over the experimental planetary series; and I come to express admiration and profound respect for this magnificent group of celestial ministers, the Mystery Monitors, who have volunteered to serve on this irregular sphere. No matter how trying the crises, you never falter. Not on the records of Nebadon nor before the commissions of Orvonton has there ever been offered an indictment of a divine Adjuster. You have been true to your trusts; you have been divinely faithful. You have helped to adjust the mistakes and to compensate for the shortcomings of all who labor on this confused planet. You are marvelous beings, guardians of the good in the souls of this backward realm. I pay you respect even while you are apparently under my jurisdiction as volunteer ministers. I bow before you in humble recognition of your exquisite unselfishness, your understanding ministry, and your impartial devotion. You deserve the name of the Godlike servers of the mortal inhabitants of this strife-torn, grief-stricken, and disease-afflicted world. I honor you! I all but worship you!” [Paper 108:3.6, page 1189:2]

Are religious groups coming together to get closer to God and His Divine Presence within?

**...spiritual growth is
mutually stimulated
when we unite
morontially...**

You certainly would have the same praise for our Thought Adjusters but how about our world, do you still feel the same way about it? Do you have better hope with what was unfolding at the Parliament?

And then I was wondering if the seraphim would have the same thoughts about our group that he had for his subject:

“Much of my difficulty was due to the unending conflict between the two natures of my subject: the urge of ambition opposed by animal indolence; the ideals of a superior people crossed by the instincts of an inferior race; the high purposes of a great mind antagonized by the urge of a primitive inheritance; the long-distance view of a far-seeing Monitor counteracted by the nearsightedness of a creature of time; the progressive plans of an ascending being modified by the desires and longings of a material nature; the flashes of universe intelligence cancelled by the chemical-energy mandates of the evolving race; the urge of angels opposed by the emotions of an animal; the training of an intellect annulled by the tendencies of instinct; the experience of the individual opposed by the accumulated propensities of the race; the aims of the best overshadowed by the drift of the worst; the flight of genius neutralized by the gravity of mediocrity; the progress of the good retarded by the inertia of the bad; the art of the beautiful besmirched by the presence of evil; the buoyancy of health neutralized by the debility of disease; the fountain of faith polluted by the poisons of fear; the spring of joy embittered by the waters of sorrow; the gladness of anticipation disillusioned by the bitterness of realization; the joys of living ever threatened by the sorrows of death. Such a life on such a planet! And yet, because of the ever-present help and urge of the Thought Adjuster, this soul did achieve a fair degree of happiness and success and has even now ascended to the judgment halls of mansonia.” [Paper 111:7.5, page 1223:7]

To quote a brother and friend in Spirit “there should be over seven billion religions on this planet since religion is a personal and genuine experience with our Universal Father through his Divine Presence that indwells each of us.”

In closing the event, the organizers announced that while the Parliament will continue to be hosted by different cities around the world, it will now convene every two years instead of five.

All of us have greatly benefited from the incomparable teachings of *The Urantia Book*. It has enhanced our understanding and our cosmic perspective and deepened our spiritual perception and receptivity. It would certainly do the same for all the religionists that are walking on this planet. We all know that spiritual growth is mutually stimulated when we unite morontially and that love supplies the soil for religious growth...



What the world needs now is love, it's the only thing that there's just too little of... Love is really the desire to do good to others... and actually do it.

Such a life on such a planet! ■

Cultivating Mind: Choosing The Right Tool

A personal account of faith as a tool of mind cultivation

Presentation made at the last Urantia Association Conference in 2015

MICHAEL HANIAN
Russia

A VERY GOOD DAY TO EVERYONE! LET ME first say that I'm happy to be here with you, to see my old friends, and to make new friends, hopefully.

It is quite challenging to attempt at presenting a well-structured talk to a community of Urantia Book readers. Frankly, I never volunteered to make this presentation, but I accepted this opportunity with gratitude. I will try to share with you some personal ideas, born out of reading and re-reading of the text of *The Urantia Book*.

Before I begin, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have made my participation in this conference possible through my scholarship.

My talk is titled, *Cultivating Mind: Choosing The Right Tool*, with the subtitle, *A personal account of faith as a tool of mind cultivation*.

I will talk about faith and mind, my faith and my mind—the mind which stubbornly tried to deny me of those truths that are so beautifully presented to us in *The Urantia Book*.

My hope is to be sincere.

My hope is to be able to share with you things precious to me, for, as we are told, "*The God-knowing man describes his spiritual experiences... for the edification and mutual satisfaction of believers.*" [Paper 1:6.6, page 30:5]



In 1986 I had a dream. I was on a beach. The weather was beautiful, there was no wind, the sun shined gently. Out of the blue, a giant wave descended on the shore, taking me with it. I was powerless, flopping about and trying to instinctively catch hold of something. Strangely, there was no fear.



Headfull of ideas, illustration

And then I felt something in my hand. Next moment I was washed on the shore, and there, in my hand, was a book.

Four years later I found *The Urantia Book*.

Looking back, I see this dream as a clear message, and a promise. And the most important part of this message is: **fear not**. In four years, these words, found so often in the book, became a magnificent and vibrant **call** and a **promise** to become a motto for the rest of my life.

...to be able to share with you things precious...

So, was it my mind that I should be eternally grateful? Not exactly. At that time, as so often in the following years, my mind did all to stop me from pursuing the right cause. It offered flawlessly logical explanations of the divine magic presented in *The Urantia Book*; it explained the recklessness of moving away from my daily routine of making a living; it hugged every possibility to stick to the respectable, well-proven, widely-accepted theories and notions. It was doing the utmost to assure me that it, my mind, was my true friend, ready and willing to serve me with those indispensable tools of logic, skepticism, facts of life, and the five senses, whose data it would faithfully and readily communicate and interpret for me.

Still, something—or *someone*—never failed to offer different explanations, different counter-arguments to all those arguments my mind was presenting. And, what **struck** me always, was the tone of that someone: it was so gentle, the music of the messages was so wonderful, that all the logic, all the facts to the contrary were losing their significance.

So I kept reading, and I kept listening to that someone. And I started to learn *to choose*.

My first *choice* was to give it a chance. To read *The Urantia Book*, to **allow** it to bear fruit in **my life**. I never regretted that choice.

Since then, something new appeared in my mind. That something was **hope**. Before, I had **longed** for a hope, but there was never a **real** hope. On the contrary: my understanding of the world could lead only to **abandoning** all hope, not **fostering** it.

That new sensation was inspiring and wonderful. The stronger my hope grew, the weaker was the fear.

At a certain point, I stopped, took a breath, and tried to ponder all this. **Why** was the ever-present fear losing its grip? **Why** was I ready to trade all the logic in the world for the wonderful feeling of hope? **Why** was this growing faith of mine **already** so powerful?

The highest level is that of the wise-man.

I kept reading, and I kept finding the answers.

I also started paying attention to certain word combinations in *The Urantia Book*, and gradually I started to get deeper into their meaning.

Living truth, living love, and living faith. What does this word “living” actually mean? Enlarging the context, we find out that “living” means vibrant, resonant, appealing, inspiring, spontaneous, and—**creative**.

Being a composer, I found the idea of **creativity** to be the most appealing to me. For creativity is ultimately calling into being a **new reality**. And that is something that makes us, if not creators, then at least **co-creators**.

My next conclusion was just waiting for the right moment to materialize: **creativity and faith go hand-in-hand**.

And right after this perception came another one: I can learn to use my faith as a **tool** that will enable me to cultivate my mind and develop my creativity.

I was finally reassured after reading those wonderful words:

“Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination.” [Paper 132:3.5, page.1459:5]

Creativity

Our mind is inherently creative. Reading *The Urantia Book* I could single out four different cases as to the level of finite creativity:

The highest level is that of the **wise-man**. Whereas there’s no such thing as creating wholly out of one’s mind—except for probably the First Source and Center—for the sake of making a definition, let us **assume** that a wise-man—or should I say a wise-person?—is someone who creates, first and foremost, out of his or her own mind. We know that Jesus left no scriptures. He used living words, as opposed to dead letters. So he was, among other things, a **wise-man**.

Well, who listened to him? His pupils, and the multitudes of both friends and foes. Knowing well that Jesus did not want to leave anything in writing, that he had destroyed that little which had been put down by him in his early years, the disciples did not write after him, and for 40 years the Spoken Word lived as a spoken word. Still, the Gospels are written text. And so the first author inevitably became a **scribe**.

Scribe is not a swear-word. If it were not for scribes, there would be no proliferation of knowledge as we know it. Still, a scribe tends to capture the dynamic and living thought and crystallize it into something **changeless**.

Now, let’s get to those who **use** these **scriptures**, the end product of a scribe’s creative efforts. Again, for the sake of simplicity, we **assume** that the next mind type does nothing but **use** that which others have created. When this is the case, we deal with a type that can be called the **sciolist**.

Sciolists are those who pick up ideas and definitions without offering anything in return. All they know is **acquisition** of knowledge. They have the tools and know the means of acquiring data. They differ from **scientists** in the same way that a living flower differs from an artificial one: the image is alike, but the substance is completely different.

This is a widely-spread mind type. But in today’s world, it is being outgrown by still another type, which I would call the **copy-paster**.

Copy-pasters are those who only know how to copy and paste. Copy from one place, and paste into another. Copy a brilliant quote of one of our outstanding predecessors—and paste it into a compilation, devoid of any **trace** of freshness.

Copy-pasters are a face of the brave new world of intellectual and creative sterility. Instant access to data is seductive and spoiling. All too often it deprives of the keen pleasure derived from the process of searching for knowledge.

Surprisingly, all this has to do with the story of Jesus and his teachings. For this shows how, in shifting from a divine mind which is creativity itself, to a mind which exhibits predominantly **mechanical** qualities, we come to explaining how mechanical thoughtlessness **contributed** to rejecting Jesus by so many of his contemporaries.

Copying and pasting does not presuppose hi-tech or modern times. It is just a barren method of dealing with intellectual property, and, as such, it existed in every time period. What exactly makes a mind reject free creativity and stick to mechanical copying instead? One of the factors is, **again**, fear.

It was **fear** that made Pharisees and scribes shut their eyes on the living truth of the glad tidings and choose slavish **repetition** of old scriptures. It was **fear** that made them denounce the Son of Man and **demand** that the multitude remained just that—a multitude, and

not a group of **individuals**, each possessed with a power to choose the Truth. But in order to be able to **choose**, one has to be able to **think**, and think **co-creatively**; whereas what the agents of the Sanhedrim imposed on the crowd was **copying** and **pasting**—they were offering **ready** solutions, demanding that these solutions be copied by the minds of those they approached and **pasted** onto each and every mind.

Let me say this again: My black-and-white definitions are offered for the sake of making a point. In reality, we shift from one ‘modus operandi’ to another, at least most of us do, and that’s pretty normal. I believe it’s the **preference** and the **overall balance** that make the difference. It’s **‘what I do when I’m at my best’** that matters.

From this perspective, what we do here, at the conference, is trying to sustain the **living word**, for most of the time we discuss, we communicate, we share, and we respond. All this is being creative and co-creative; this is drinking from the refreshing well of spontaneity; this is living the spirit and not just the letter.



I’ll continue with my personal story about faith and mind.

In the beginning it was a bumpy ride. I guess, it was about distance. When two people try to tell each other something, they come closer, so that they could hear better and wouldn’t have to shout. So what happened was this: My newly-born faith, my precious baby, was all happy and joyful; so happy and so joyful that for some time it did not notice my mind, which was left in the dark, all by itself. The mind could **feel** the presence of light, somewhere in the end of the tunnel, but the description of that light was too vague to make an impression. And, it was about the language, too: My faith hadn’t yet mastered the **language of communication** with the mind. It hadn’t found the **right words** yet. Its magical brush wasn’t there yet to paint and portray the wonders of the **spiritual joy in full color**. My wondering and anxious self was right in-between, torn by sudden dashes of faith on the one hand and down-to-earth reasoning of the mind on the other.

Yet, I had **made up my mind** that I would turn the faith into the **tool**. And so my mind began looking for instructions. And, they were forthcoming. A set of instructions was preceded by this title:

A spiritual tool called faith for cultivating one’s mind

Warning: before proceeding, read instructions carefully.

1. **Purpose of the tool:** to encourage religious living.
2. **Operating environment:** day-to-day life.

3. **Safety precautions:**

- Handle with care: Faith is both powerful and delicate. When abused, it can lead to **“convulsions of fanaticism”** [Paper 110:4.5, page 1207:5]
- Don’t expose the tool in a hostile environment: do not **“cast pearls before swine”** [Paper 140:3.18, page 1571:5]
- Preserve well: Although there is no ‘best before’ on the package, prolonged inactivity will result in the tool getting rusty. That means, use your faith.

But not a word on **how** to use it!

I didn’t know then that there **couldn’t** be any instructions to **copy**. I didn’t know that one **always** has to find a **personal** way of exercising faith.

What was even more important, I didn’t know exactly why I would be applying my faith, what **goals** I would set for myself, in other words—what I wanted to **achieve** through faith.

...in order to be able to choose, one has to be able to think, and think co-creatively

What do you **really** want?—I asked myself. I wanted a lot of things. But there was one thing I desired **most** of all: I wanted to get rid of **fear**.

It became my second rational, intellectual **choice** on the road to a better cultivated mind. So why did I choose fear as the key target?

If I had to single out just one negative quality impairing my whole life, that would be fear. It is so rightly said in *The Urantia Book: “Fear is man’s chief enslaver.”* [Paper 142:0.2, page 1596:2] We are told that fear has been inherited from the animal kingdom. A Life Carrier admires the horse, but bewails the fact that the horse is so easily frightened. Well, here is a message to us, humans: Whereas a frightened horse flees, man kills out of fear. Or gets killed. We are told that **“fear can kill.”** [Paper 88:4.8, page 971:2] We are further told, **“...fear is a master intellectual fraud practiced upon the evolving mortal soul.”** [Paper 48:7.4, page 556:4] And it is quite obvious that this fraud is practiced through the agency of **the mind**.

What exactly does fear do to one’s mind and personality? A Divine Counselor warns us, that we **distort** our mind by **“...useless anxiety.”** [Paper 9:5.7, page 103:5] And anxiety is a by-product of fear. A Solitary Messenger states that fear **pollutes** the fountain of faith, **“...the fountain of faith polluted by the poisons of fear.”** [Paper 111:7.5, page 1224:0] Midwayers point at fear that **“...prevents the honest souls... from accepting the new light of the gospel...”** [Paper 159:4.9, page 1768:5] emphasis added

So what is fear? Fear is the antipode of love. Love and fear are mutually exclusive. These two substances do not mix. Where there is fear, there is no love. Where there is love, there is no fear. It is eternally true that **“...love of God... casts out all fear.”** [Paper 48:6.8, page 552:6] That is why the Adjuster **“...would like to change... [our]... feelings of fear to convictions of love...”** [Paper 108:5.8, page 1192:3]

But maybe, could fear be useful? It sure is. For the body. It warns, it prevents, it makes us cry for help. But the more we understand the Master's words that "*Man cannot live by bread alone.*" [Paper 160:3.1, page 1777:2] the less we need fear. And, the more we need love. And the more faith becomes the bridge over troubled waters of our mind.

...if you truly believe in God, there can be no fear. We only have fear to the direct proportion of not having faith.

Once I started using the new tool, it showed some pretty unexpected—and wonderful—qualities.

It revealed a unique capacity to grow. It grows **in space** occupying more and more of it. It grows **in time**, pointing into the **future** on the one hand and finding its foundation in the things of the past on the other.

Like with so many other things, there was a turning point. A turning point in the fight between my faith and my fear.

It occurred during one of those routine debates. "What are you going to eat?"—cried my mind, powered by fear. "You are not being responsible! You have a family! You should stop writing your music that gives you next to nothing and start doing what everybody else does: Earn a living." I tried to respond, but my answers were feeble.

Suddenly, my little girl entered the room. "Daddy, will you play me this song?"

"Which one?" I asked.

"The one you wrote for me yesterday."

So, I did. And, I saw how happy she was. And I realized that all that was **really important** in my life was already there. And I understood I could do without fear.

Fear is a generic name. In fact, we deal with its many faces, its many forms: anxiety, mistrust, suspicion—to name just a few. And every time it is a sign of the **absence of love**. Fear is rational—love is irrational. Fear is incarcerating—love is liberating. Fear is stressing—love is relaxing. They are mutually exclusive. Like day and night. Like light and dark. You cannot mix them. You can only **choose** between them.

So, the problem of **choice** again. A choice between now and sometime later. A choice between material and spiritual. A choice between thinking and believing.

In the end of the day, it's a choice between believing and **not** believing. For if you **truly** believe in God, there can be no fear. We only have fear to the direct proportion of not having faith. So **fear not** becomes another way of saying: **Have faith**. The problem of combating fear is the fundamental problem of allowing faith to take the upper hand in human affairs.

"*Fearnot*" [Paper 100:7.15, page 1103:3] was the watchword of the Master, because when you fear, you can't truly love. It was **fear** acting through its different materializations—jealousy, mistrust, suspicion, envy, and vengefulness—that ruined Judas. **Fear** for his life led Peter to a very dangerous

state of denying his Master—wasn't he close to following in the steps of Judas? **Fear** of material loss led Matadormus to rejecting the Master's offer. Was this fear substantiated? No. The midwayers disclose to us that Matadormus would have got all his treasures right back had he only accepted his new role. **Fear** of troubles with the Jews led Pilate to giving into their outrageous demands.

Fear is blinding. Fear is disconnecting. Fear is treacherous. Fear is murderous.

Fear is the irrational outcome of a purely rational behavior.

Fear saves us today, only to doom us tomorrow.

Fear is another name of short-sightedness. It is a caution that has outgrown itself. It is a precaution left unattended. Fear offers a **dime** and robs the **fortune**. Fear saves from **bruises** and afflicts **permanent injury**.

Fear not! These words should become not only a watchword, but also a part of a daily prayer: "*O Lord, deliver me from the fetters of fear! Do not allow its poison to distort my mind! Substitute it with peace of the mind, everlasting calmness of the soul, and all-encompassing love.*"

God is love. Absence of love is fear. So fear is absence of God. And so it is unreal, because there isn't a place where God wouldn't be. **THAT IS WHY IT IS CALLED AN INTELLECTUAL FRAUD**. Fear is what's **unreal**, but what tends to deny and substitute everything which is **truly real**.

You cannot kill love. But you can ban it from entering your mind.

You cannot stop God. But you can ban Him from cultivating your mind.

Faith is my hack and my sword. It's the only tool and the only weapon I will ever need to help my mind **win** the ongoing battle with fear, **which is disbelief**.

As time goes by, I notice that the distance between the newly born faith and the mind, the distance which used to be a problem, is getting shorter, for the two are getting closer, and they are mastering a common language. I am beginning to see that "*Faith [is] the supreme assertion of human thought,*" [Paper 3:3.9, page 51:8] that "*faith... is reasonable,*" [Paper 103:7.1, page 1137:6] that "*faith is a vision of the spiritualized mind.*" [Paper 1:3.3, page 25:3]

I can be confident that I have chosen the right tool. Unlike other tools, intense use only makes it sharper. All I have to do is to keep it handy.



For me, it all started with a **supposition** that I can do without fear, that fear is a useless state of mind.

It continues with a **trial period**—a ban on fear.

One day it will become a **habit** of living without fear. And a **habit** is something the **mind** is quite happy with.

The mind making a choice to **fear not**. ■

With Respect To Adversity

"Remind thyself, in the darkest moments, that every failure is only a step toward success, every detection of what is false directs you toward what is true, every trial exhausts some tempting form of error, and every adversity will only hide, for a time, your path to peace and fulfillment." Augustine Mandido II, author.

BART GIBBONS
USA

READERS OF *THE URANTIA BOOK* ARE thrilled to learn that salvation is based on faith alone, that a divine fragment within the mind will fuse with each of us for all eternity, and that there is a plan for an eternal life of service, worship, and discovery.

But with respect to adversity, what guidance does *The Urantia Book* offer? How do the teachings help us respond when we are shattered by devastating and unexpected tragedy or our own misguided efforts causes suffering and despair in our daily lives?

Fortunately, the Revelators provide ample material to instruct and inspire us. I selected some relevant teachings and grouped them into the following five areas:

- 1) **Failure**— a tool for acquiring wisdom and spiritual achievement.
- 2) **Perspective**—an outlook that paves the way for spiritual progress.
- 3) **Potential Divinity**—a list of twelve difficult situations and how the right response reveals how genuine our faith is
- 4) **Coping skills**—how to maintain in the aftermath of devastation.
- 5) **Putting it all to use...**in eternity.

It's important to realize that, as Jesus says, *"...you may enter the kingdom as a child, but the Father requires that you grow up, by grace, to the full stature of spiritual adulthood."* [Paper 193:2:2, page 2054:3] This includes not only bearing the fruits of the spirit, but also showing poise, courage and faith when your world falls apart.

Failure

"Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment." Will Rogers.



During the rest period at Magadan, the Greek philosopher Rodan met with Nathaniel, Thomas, and other believers who chanced to be on hand. These talks produced profound insights into many subjects, including failure.

And it is in this business of facing failure and adjusting to defeat that the far-reaching vision of religion exerts its supreme influence. Failure is simply an educational episode — a cultural experiment in the acquirement of wisdom — in the experience of the God-seeking man who has embarked on the eternal adventure of the exploration of a universe. To such men defeat is but a new tool for the achievement of higher levels of universe reality. [Paper 160:4:15, page 1780:1]

To truly appreciate the depth of this teaching about failure, we need to understand the dynamic relationship between reasoning, wisdom, and spiritual achievement. As the following quotes indicate, reasoning leads to wisdom, which eventually culminates in spirit leading, reflective worship, and God-consciousness.

... reasoning leads to wisdom, which eventually culminates in spirit leading...

When reason once recognizes right and wrong, it exhibits wisdom; when wisdom chooses between right and wrong, truth and error, it demonstrates spirit leading. [Paper 103:9:10, page 1142:1]

Thinking surrenders to wisdom, and wisdom is lost in enlightened and reflective worship. [Paper 112:2:11, page 1228:6]

Education is the business of living; it must continue throughout a lifetime so that mankind may gradually experience the ascending levels of mortal wisdom, which are:

1. *The knowledge of things.*
2. *The realization of meanings.*

3. *The appreciation of values.*
4. *The nobility of work – duty.*
5. *The motivation of goals — morality.*
6. *The love of service – character.*
7. *Cosmic insight – spiritual discernment.* [Paper 71:7:5–12, page 806:5–12]

And then, by means of these achievements, many will ascend to the mortal ultimate of mind attainment, God-consciousness. [Paper 71:7:13, page 806:13]

Returning to Rodan's teaching, facing failure and making adjustments is a necessary step to get back in tune with spirit leading, which is essential for spiritual progress. With the next discussion point, Rodan encourages the religionist to feel gratified at having made the changes that were needed, rather than regretting the past.

...view things in their relative importance.

The career of a God-seeking man may prove to be a great success in the light of eternity, even though the whole temporal-life enterprise may appear as an overwhelming failure, provided each life failure yielded the culture of wisdom and spirit achievement. [Paper 160:4:16, page 1780:2]

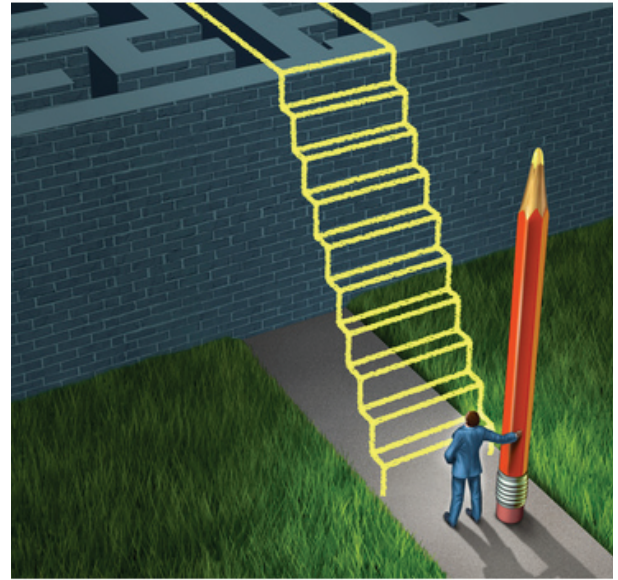
Perspective

One meaning of perspective is to view things in their relative importance. By emphasizing the eternal perspective, we have Jesus' word that our post-mortal career is assured:

Jesus portrayed the profound surety of the God-knowing mortal when he said: "To a God-knowing kingdom believer, what does it matter if all things earthly crash?" Temporal securities are vulnerable, but spiritual sureties are impregnable. When the flood tides of human adversity, selfishness, cruelty, hate, malice, and jealousy beat about the mortal soul, you may rest in the assurance that there is one inner bastion, the citadel of the spirit, which is absolutely unassailable; at least this is true of every human being who has dedicated the keeping of his soul to the indwelling spirit of the eternal God. [Paper 100:2:7, page 1096:4]

In Paper 3 a Divine Counselor says that evolutionary creature life is beset with certain inevitabilities. In order for a desirable trait to exist, the opposite of that trait must be allowed to be, so that the difference between the two becomes clear. For example, #5 on the list of the nine reads "...Is the love of truth and the willingness to go wherever it leads, desirable? Then must man grow up in a world where error is present and falsehood always possible." [Paper 3:5:10, page 51.9]

It's evident that it's the divine plan to have a world filled with difficulties. Believers must bear in mind that



Cultivating habits of problem solving, illustration

contrast is necessary for the supernal qualities to be realized.

In Jesus' teaching at Tyre, the Master speaks of the joyous perspective of true believers:

God-knowing individuals are not discouraged by misfortune or downcast by disappointment. Believers are immune to the depression consequent upon purely material upheavals; spirit lovers are not perturbed by the episodes of the material world. Candidates for eternal life are practitioners of an invigorating and constructive technique for meeting all of the vicissitudes and harassments of mortal living. Every day a true believer lives, he finds it easier to do the right thing.

[Paper 156:5:13, page 1739:8]

A Melchizedek of Nebadon gives us a beautifully concise lesson on perspective: "*The goal of human self-realization should be spiritual, not material. The only realities worth striving for are divine, spiritual, and eternal.*"

[Paper 100:2:6, page 1096:3]

Potential Divinity:

This section is remarkable, in that it specifies how we are expected to handle adverse situations. By reacting to the situations as described, we are demonstrating our potential divinity. No less than twelve examples are given by a Melchizedek of Nebadon in Paper 101:

Through religious faith the soul of man reveals itself and demonstrates the potential divinity of its emerging nature by the characteristic manner in which it induces the mortal personality to react to certain trying intellectual and testing social situations. Genuine spiritual faith (true moral consciousness) is revealed in that it:

1. *Causes ethics and morals to progress despite inherent and adverse animalistic tendencies.*

2. Produces a sublime trust in the goodness of God even in the face of bitter disappointment and crushing defeat.
3. Generates profound courage and confidence despite natural adversity and physical calamity.
4. Exhibits inexplicable poise and sustaining tranquillity notwithstanding baffling diseases and even acute physical suffering.
5. Maintains a mysterious poise and composure of personality in the face of maltreatment and the rankest injustice.
6. Maintains a divine trust in ultimate victory in spite of the cruelties of seemingly blind fate and the apparent utter indifference of natural forces to human welfare.
7. Persists in the unswerving belief in God despite all contrary demonstrations of logic and successfully withstands all other intellectual sophistries.
8. Continues to exhibit undaunted faith in the soul's survival regardless of the deceptive teachings of false science and the persuasive delusions of unsound philosophy.
9. Lives and triumphs irrespective of the crushing overload of the complex and partial civilizations of modern times.
10. Contributes to the continued survival of altruism in spite of human selfishness, social antagonisms, industrial greeds, and political maladjustments.
11. Steadfastly adheres to a sublime belief in universe unity and divine guidance regardless of the perplexing presence of evil and sin.
12. Goes right on worshiping God in spite of anything and everything. Dares to declare, "Even though he slay me, yet will I serve him." [Paper 101:3.4-16, page 1108:3-15]

Coping skills:

The Urantia Book has good practical advice for how to cope with trying situations.

Jesus emphasized the value of diversion and relaxation. The apostles were having trouble getting along with each other, as well as with John's disciples. Jesus brought them all up Mount Sartaba, for a period of rest. We are told "...this was a marvelous occasion in the experience of each of them; they never forgot the day going up the mountain. Throughout the entire trip hardly a word was said about their troubles. Upon reaching the top of the mountain, Jesus seated them about him while he said: "My brethren, you must all learn the value of rest and the efficacy of relaxation. You must realize that the best method of solving some entangled problems is to forsake them for a time. Then when you go back fresh from your rest or worship, you are able to attack your troubles with a clearer head

and a steadier hand, not to mention a more resolute heart. Again, many times your problem is found to have shrunk in size and proportions while you have been resting your mind and body." [Paper 143:3:3, page 1611:1]

In the second preaching tour, Jesus gives us a lesson regarding contentment:

When Jesus was visiting the group of evangelists working under the supervision of Simon Zelotes, during their evening conference Simon asked the Master: "Why are some persons so much more happy and contented than others? Is contentment a matter of religious experience?" Among other things, Jesus said in answer to Simon's question:

"Simon, some persons are naturally more happy than others. Much, very much, depends upon the willingness of man to be led and directed by the Father's spirit which lives within him. Have you not read in the Scriptures the words of the wise man, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts'? And also that such spirit-led mortals say: 'The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a goodly heritage.' 'A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked,' for 'a good man shall be satisfied from within himself.' 'A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance and is a continual feast. Better is a little with the reverence of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fatted ox and hatred therewith. Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without rectitude.' 'A merry heart does good like a medicine.' 'Better is a handful with composure than a superabundance with sorrow and vexation of spirit.' [Paper 149:5:1-2, page 1674:3-4]

Jesus emphasized the value of diversion and relaxation.

Much of man's sorrow is born of the disappointment of his ambitions and the wounding of his pride. Although men owe a duty to themselves to make the best of their lives on earth, having thus sincerely exerted themselves, they should cheerfully accept their lot and exercise ingenuity in making the most of that which has fallen to their hands. [Paper 149:5:3, page 1674:5]

Seek not, then, for false peace and transient joy but rather for the assurance of faith and the sureties of divine sonship which yield composure, contentment, and supreme joy in the spirit." [Paper 149:5:4, page 1674:6]

Here are two more of Jesus' quotes to take to heart on coping:

From Jesus' teaching at Tyre: *"The God-conscious mortal is certain of salvation; he is unafraid of life; he is honest and consistent. He knows how bravely to endure unavoidable suffering; he is uncomplaining when faced by inescapable hardship." [Paper 156:5:20, page 1740:7]*

In Ordination of the Twelve, Jesus advises *"Be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves." [Paper 140:3:3, page 1580:8]*

Putting it all to use...in eternity

In Paper 26 (Ministering Spirits of the Central Universe), a Perfector of Wisdom from Uversa describes the Pilgrim Helpers, whose role is to “... *welcome the much-traveled ascenders of space to the stabilized worlds and settled economy of the central universe.*” [Paper 26:5:1, page 291:1]

Two paragraphs later, it reads “... *But long before reaching Havona, these ascendant children of time have learned to feast upon uncertainty, to fatten upon disappointment, to enthuse over apparent defeat, to invigorate in the presence of difficulties, to exhibit indomitable courage in the face of immensity, and to exercise unconquerable faith when confronted with the challenge of the inexplicable. Long since, the battle cry of these pilgrims became: “In liaison with God, nothing — absolutely nothing — is impossible.*” [Paper 26:5:3, page 291:3]

Evidently it is an essential part of our development, both as mortals and in eternity, to build strong character and unshakable faith.

Happily, the equalizer to this immense challenge is given in The Morontia Life by an Archangel of Nebadon, who says “*The higher the mortal species, the greater the stress and the greater the capacity for humor as well as the necessity for it.*” [Paper 48:4:17, page 549:4]. Just earlier, it reads “*One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego.*” [Paper 48:4:15, page 549:2]

Indited by an American agondonter for the benefit of all fellow Urantians. ■



The Door is Open, Let Whosoever Will, Come

VERNER VERASS
Australia

SUCH IS THE EMBRACING GENEROSITY of the Father, he extends his welcome to each of us to accept the gift of eternal life and the ever increasing capacity for experiencing the joy of existence...true adventure!

Many readers have savoured the words “whosoever will,” for which a search results in seven quotes as follows.

whosoever will

1. The love of God is secondary to no other attribute of the Divine nature. It is wrong to think of God as being coaxed into loving his children.

It is wrong to think of God as being coaxed into loving his children because of the sacrifices of his Sons or the intercession of his subordinate creatures, “for the Father himself loves you.” It is in response to this paternal affection that God sends the marvelous Adjusters to indwell the minds of men. God’s love is universal; “whosoever will may come.” He would “have all men be saved by coming into the knowledge of the truth.” He is “not willing that any should perish.” [Paper 2:5.2, page 39:1]emphasis added

2. The course ahead is announced, the way is open. The race for perfection is on! “Whosoever will” may enter.

The goal of eternity is ahead! The adventure of divinity attainment lies before you! The race for perfection is on! whosoever will may enter, and certain victory will crown the efforts of every human being who will run the race of faith and trust, depending every step of the way on the leading of the indwelling Adjuster and on the guidance of that good spirit of the Universe Son, which so freely has been poured out upon all flesh. [Paper 32:5.8, page 365:4] emphasis added

3. Jesus’ open-minded welcome is extended to all. With sympathetic heart he embraces every individual soul within the whole universe.

Jesus was very broad in his outlook. He exhorted his followers to preach the gospel to all peoples. He was free from all narrow-mindedness. His sympathetic heart embraced all mankind, even a universe. Always his invitation was, “Whosoever will, let him come.” [Paper 100:7.6, page 1102:3] emphasis added

4. Jesus understood human frailty, yet in full knowledge of such weakness, placed no restrictions or qualifications save the faith of the one who comes.

To Jesus, Judas was a faith adventure. From the beginning the Master fully understood the weakness of this apostle and well knew the dangers of admitting him to fellowship. But it is the nature of the Sons of God to give every created being a full and equal chance for salvation and survival. Jesus wanted not only the mortals of this world but



The door is open, illustration

the onlookers of innumerable other worlds to know that, when doubts exist as to the sincerity and wholeheartedness of a creature’s devotion to the kingdom, it is the invariable practice of the Judges of men fully to receive the doubtful candidate. The door of eternal life is wide open to all; “whosoever will may come”; there are no restrictions or qualifications save the faith of the one who comes. [Paper 139:12.7, page 1566:6] emphasis added

5. Childlike trust is at the core of peacemaking. Being born anew is the destiny of “whosoever will” lose his life.

Children can easily be taught to function as peacemakers. They enjoy team activities; they like to play together. Said the Master at another time: “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life shall find it.” [Paper 140:5.19, page 1575:4] emphasis added

6. Jesus asks the direct question. How long will it take us to persuade you to enter joyfully into your spiritual inheritance?

“How long will you tarry in the valley of decision? Why do you halt between two opinions? Why should Jew or gentile hesitate to accept the good news that he is a son of the eternal God? How long will it take us to persuade you to enter joyfully into your spiritual inheritance? I came into this world to reveal the Father to you and to lead you to the Father. The first I have done, but the last I may not do without your consent; the Father never compels any man to enter the kingdom. The invitation ever has been and always will be: Whosoever will, let him come and freely partake of the water of life.” [Paper 165:3.8, page 1820:7] emphasis added

7. To follow Jesus is to believe not merely in him but in the father who sent him. The person who sees Jesus sees the Father.

“He who believes this gospel, believes not merely in me but in Him who sent me. When you look upon me, you see not only the Son of Man but also Him who sent me. I am the light of the world, and whosoever will believe my teaching shall no longer abide in darkness. If you gentiles will hear me, you shall receive the words of life and shall enter forthwith into the joyous liberty of the truth of sonship with God. If my fellow countrymen, the Jews, choose to reject me and to refuse my teachings, I will not sit in judgment on them, for I came not to judge the world but to offer it salvation. Nevertheless, they who reject me and refuse to receive my teaching shall be brought to judgment in due season by my Father and those whom he has appointed to sit in judgment on such as reject the gift of mercy and the truths of salvation. Remember, all of you, that I speak not of myself, but that I have faithfully declared to you that which the Father commanded I should reveal to the children of men. And these words which the Father directed me to speak to the world are words of divine truth, everlasting mercy, and eternal life.” [Paper 174:5.7, page 1903:4] emphasis added

A promise of life in abundance for “whosoever will.” ■

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