



Program — The Inner Landscape

July 2002

“For a man to conquer himself is the first and noblest of all victories.”

— *Plato*

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Manifestations of God through word and images bring together in one meditative whole the beauty, mystery and interdependence of the physical world of creation and its underlying spiritual significance to man. They sum up the origin and destiny of man, and the meaning and purpose of his life on earth.

All of the beauties of creation visible to the eyes of man are signs of the attributes of God, tokens of His power, majesty and loving-kindness – symbols of spiritual qualities to draw the mind and heart closer to Him. They open the inner eye of man and lead him to knowledge of God, an understanding of his place in the universe and lift his sight to the horizon of his spiritual destiny.

These signs are “*limitless in their range*”, both in the natural world and in the spirit of man. They lead him to recognise and abide by the universal law of unity in the phenomenal world and its manifestation in the world of the spirit.

— *Tokens from the Sacred Writings*

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We have caused the rivers of Divine utterance to proceed out of Our throne, that the tender herbs of wisdom and understanding may spring forth from the soil of your hearts. Will ye not be thankful?

A drop of the billowing ocean of His endless mercy hath adorned all creation with the ornament of existence, and a breath wafted from His peerless Paradise hath invested all beings with the robe of His sanctity and glory. A sprinkling from the unfathomed deep of His sovereign and all-pervasive Will hath, out of utter nothingness, called into being a creation which is infinite in its range and deathless in its duration. The wonders of His bounty can never cease, and the stream of His merciful grace can never be arrested. The process of His creation hath had no beginning, and can have no end.

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...I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

— *Psalms 61:2*

By degrees, little by little, from time to time, a wise person should remove his own impurities as a smith removes the dross from silver.
— *Buddhism: Dhammapada 239*

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Buddhist practice is a process of transformation through purification that brings out the best of what is already there. It does not make people into what they are not, nor import any new material. It allows your ultimate identity as an enlightened being to emerge as you overcome the relative delusions and defilements that mask your Buddha nature. It is transformation to your ultimate self.
— *The Twelfth Tai Situpa, Awakening the Sleeping Buddha*

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...reflect upon the perfection of man's creation, and that all these planes and states are folded up and hidden away within him.

Dost thou reckon thyself only a puny form
When within thee the universe is folded?

Then we must labour to destroy the animal condition, till the meaning of humanity shall come to light.

— *Bahá'u'lláh*

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...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
— *Corinthians, 2:9*

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O YE SONS OF SPIRIT!

Ye are My treasury, for in you I have treasured the pearls of My mysteries and the gems of My knowledge. Guard them from the strangers amidst My servants and from the ungodly amongst My people.

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O SON OF MAN!

My eternity is My creation, I have created it for thee. Make it the garment of thy temple. My unity is My handiwork; I have wrought it for thee; clothe thyself therewith, that thou mayest be to all eternity the revelation of My everlasting being.

O SON OF MAN!

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.

— *Bahá'í Writings*

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The Inner Landscape

All that which is found inside can be known thanks to the outside.

God did not wish it, that everything He gave to man for his own and for his profit should remain hidden... And if He has concealed certain things, He has given each one a mark visible from outside by means of particular signs – like a man who has buried some treasure and, in order to find it again, marks the spot.

We discover all that a mountain hides thanks to the exterior signs and through correspondences; and in a same way we find out all the properties of plants and what there is inside stones. There is nothing in the depths of the sea, nothing in the heights of the firmament, that man is not capable of discovering.

No mountain is so vast as to conceal what it encloses from the eyes of man. Everything is revealed by signs... In the same way, all that a man encloses can be seen from the outside, and thus, by observing the exterior we can get to know the inside...

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From the Holy Passions by Michael Fitzgerald:

Somehow, the inner landscape
has come back from being ruins –
somehow, it now resembles terrain –

I am anxious to plant some good seed –
I want to lay down some solid furrows –
this fall, I will put in some mulch –

the inner man, the inner person
listens to itself and its world –
it will let you know who you are –

just this week I felt like I let go
from holding my breath the last
twenty years – just now, I feel as if

I can live my own life instead
of the life the expectations mongers
had planned for me – this is not

a way of talking about my day
this is a mirror – see in it
if you like – see if you are there –

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The souls must be trained ... Withdraw into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful as yet, do as does the sculptor of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until he has shown a beautiful face upon his statue. So do you also; cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is shadowed, labour to make all glow with beauty, and do not cease chiselling your statue until there shall shine out on you the godlike splendour of virtue, until you shall see the final goodness surely established in the stainless shrine.

— Plotinus, *The Enneads* 1.9

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O peoples of the earth! God, the Eternal Truth, is My witness that streams of fresh and soft-flowing waters, have gushed from the rocks, through the sweetness of the words uttered by your Lord, the Unconstrained; and still ye slumber. Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things. Thus biddeth you the Lord of creation, the movement of Whose Pen hath revolutionised the soul of mankind.

— *The Bahá'í Writings*

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Take the Step of Spirit

The sun is glistening on the peaks
of the gentle waves,
Water is moving and being lovingly
caressed by the sun,
The seagulls glide down towards the shore,
There is harmony in nature,
Nature is following its destiny,
And it has no will.

The shore break does not listen
in the sunlight,

The waves are crashing down
and the water is murky,
Here the water does not reflect the light,
But out beyond the shore
where the water is calmer,
There are brilliant displays of light
that shine on the water.

The light that comes from one
sun is glistening in a million spots,
But it is all a reflection of the same light.

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I am well aware, O my Lord, that I have been so carried away by the clear tokens of Thy loving-kindness, and so completely inebriated with the wine of Thine utterance, that whatever I behold I readily discover that it maketh Thee known unto me, and it remindeth me of Thy signs, and of Thy tokens, and of Thy testimonies. By Thy glory! Every time I lift up mine eyes unto Thy heaven, I call to mind Thy highness and Thy loftiness, and Thine incomparable glory and greatness; and every time I turn my gaze to Thine earth, I am made to recognise the evidences of Thy power and the tokens of Thy bounty. And when I behold the sea, I find that it speaketh to me of Thy majesty, and of the potency of Thy might, and of Thy sovereignty and Thy grandeur. And at whatever time I contemplate the mountains, I am led to discover the ensigns of Thy victory and the standards of Thine omnipotence.

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Morphic Shifts

The Egocentric Personality

My will be done

Is intent on self-glory.

Is concerned about other people's opinions of self; craves admiration and popularity.

Is rigid, self opinionated.

Cannot stand criticism.

Desires power over others; uses others for his own ends.

Wants ease; is self indulgent.

Holds self-preservation of supreme importance.

Tries to be self-sufficient; has a practical atheism by which he feels he does not need God's help.

Feels that life owes him certain things.

Is oversensitive; feelings easily hurt;

The Transcended Personality

Thy will be done

Has true humility.

Is increasingly free from the necessity for the approval or praise of others.

Is flexible.

Handles criticism objectively; usually benefits from it.

Is devoted to the common good.

Ease given up when necessary; knows that many comforts precious to the self may have to go.

Is aware that you lose your life to find it.

Is acutely aware of his need of God in everyday life.

Realises that life owes him nothing; that goodness cannot earn him anything.

Readily forgives others.

nourishes resentments.

Springs back slowly, painfully from disappointments.

Trusts in material possessions for security.

Indulges in self-pity when things go wrong.

Needs praise and publicity for his good deeds.

Is tolerant of, even blind to, his own sins; appalled at the evil in others.

Is self-complacent; craves the peace of mind that relieves him of unwelcome responsibilities.

Love those who love him.

— *Divine Therapy*

Has capacity to rise above disappointments and use them creatively.

Knows that security is in relationship to God, not in things.

Has objective resiliency when things go wrong.

Works well with others; can take second place.

Understands the potential evil in himself and lays it before God; is not shocked at any evil possibility in self or others.

Knows that warfare between good and evil will not allow undisturbed peace.

Can love the unlovely; has a feeling of oneness in God toward all humanity.

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Intone, O My servant, the verses of God
that have been received by thee,
as intoned by them who have drawn
nigh unto Him,
that the sweetness of thy melody
may kindle thine own soul,
and attract the hearts of all men.
Whoso reciteth, in the privacy of his chamber,
the verses revealed by God,
the scattering angels of the Almighty
shall scatter abroad the fragrance
of the words uttered by his mouth,

and shall cause the heart
of every righteous man to throb.
Though he may, at first, remain unaware
of its effect, yet the virtue
of the grace vouchsafed unto him
must needs sooner or later exercise
its influence upon his soul.
Thus have the mysteries of the Revelation
of God been decreed
by virtue of the Will of Him
Who is the source of power and wisdom.

— *Bahá'u'lláh*