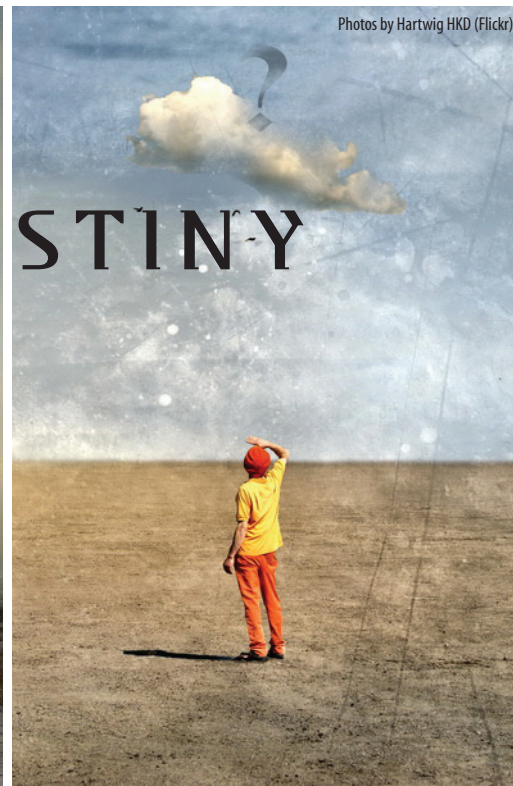
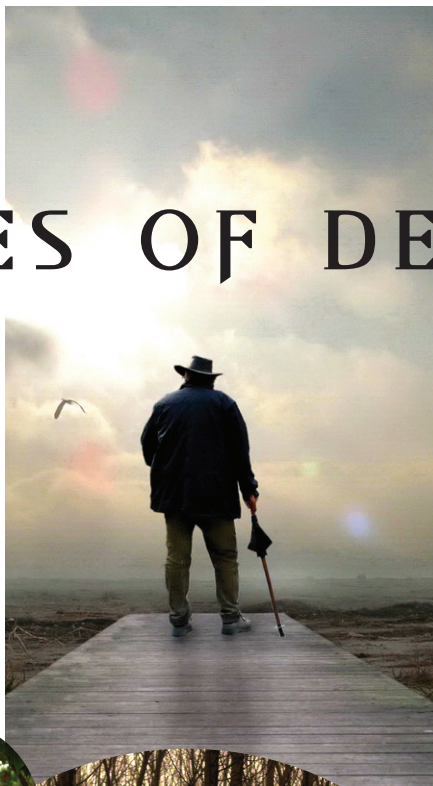
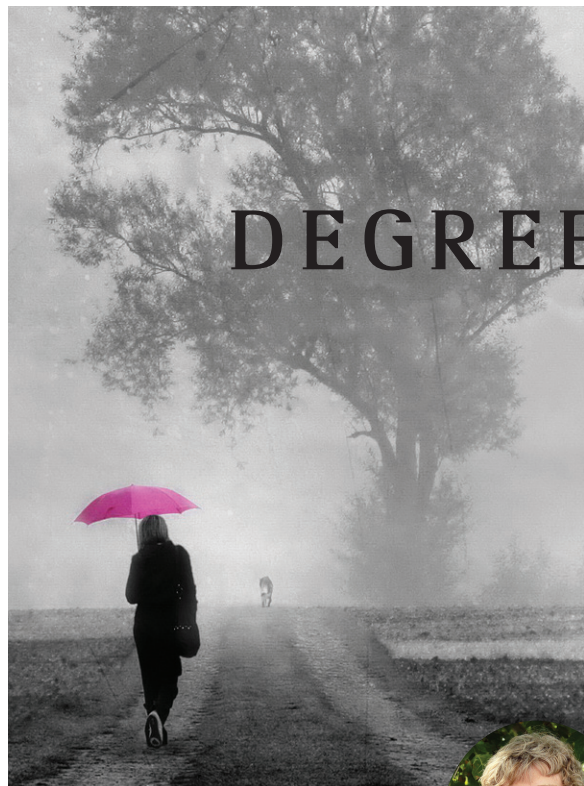


# DEGREES OF DESTINY



by Niánn Emerson Chase



Often it is difficult to hold fast to the vision of where you belong in your highest destiny. Often you probably feel as if you are walking in a maze of distress and confusion due to your own choices as well as the choices of others. It is so easy for any of us to get confounded in the thick forest of daily living, getting caught up in seeing only the trees right in front of us and thus losing our sense of direction and getting lost, not able to find the path that leads out of the dense darkness of the forest into a meadow of light where a refreshing stream flows. With the vision of our highest destiny and a spiritized perspective, we are lifted out of the seeming maze of the forest and raised above to see a broader perspective, thus able to find the pathways that we should take in the moment that leads eventually to light and life.



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tell their stories of unfoldment into their vocation, their “higher” calling. A vocation is different than a job or a career, though someone’s job or career may actually be their vocation, if they are so blessed. A vocation is an ideal, an aspiration, a life-work, something that a person would do whether they got paid for it or not. As Gabriel of Urantia points out in his article, at times people may serve in “intermediate” callings or destinies that prepare them for the one that they have felt driven to discover.

But *destiny* goes beyond just having a vocation that gives someone a sense of purpose and fulfillment; in a bigger sense it involves serving humankind. Certain world leaders have felt that bigger sense of destiny. Winston Churchill was one who had that understanding of his own destiny and spoke of it in his reference to his role in leading his nation into the fight against Hitler and his Nazi movement that threatened to take over the world, at least the Western world. Ironically, both Churchill and Hitler believed that their nations had a destiny to basically rule the world, and England used the principle of “manifest destiny” to build its empire through colonization of other nations, a practice that brought much exploitation of human and natural resources that benefitted mostly England and its interests—of course at the expense of the peoples, cultures, and lands being colonized.

Since childhood I have carried within me a sense of destiny, meaning that I felt a specific calling, a particular purpose, a “mission” that I was meant to fulfill if I chose to do so. By the time I was in my early teens, I had grown to realize that this calling came from divine sources and involved being of service to humankind. Looking back at the unfoldment of events in my life, I see a thread of divine presence and leading, but I also see certain detours I took off of that path of preparation for my true vocation. I temporarily got lost in the maze of the challenges of daily living a few times, but I always found my way back to the more reasonable and healthy way of thinking, feeling, and doing.

Not everyone has the sense of destiny that I have experienced, but the writers of the articles in this issue of the *Alternative Voice* have, and they

In spite of the negative aspects of colonization, some colonized peoples and nations did progress to a degree in their own evolution and development as a result of British influence; so, often an individual’s or group’s (even nation’s) sense of destiny may be partially within the pattern of divine principles and partially outside of the higher manifestation of that destiny. After all, there is much imperfection in all attempts at manifesting higher destiny—personal and collective.



The late Nelson Mandela (first President of apartheid-free South Africa) definitely had an understanding of personal destiny, and his predecessor President de Kerk of apartheid South Africa recognized Mandela's destiny when, in reference to Mandela's release from almost thirty years' imprisonment, he stated: "Mr. Mandela has walked a long road and now stands at the top of the hill. A traveler would sit down and admire the view. But a man of destiny knows that beyond this hill lies another and another. The journey is never complete." Mr. Mandela certainly fulfilled his destiny of bringing a country out of violent turmoil into the beginning stages of reconciliation and democracy.

In her article in this issue of the *Alternative Voice*, Blue Evening Star Vasvary discusses *Destiny Reservists*, those individuals who have a divinely-led mission to take part in assisting in bringing progress to civilization, especially in emergency situations, like the threat of Nazism or assisting South Africa to transition from the lower apartheid government into a more just and higher form of government. Many who are familiar with the concept of *Destiny Reservists* conjecture that both Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela were of this category during their time of service on earth, though neither one of them knew of the term. And there are those who think that Churchill's colleague and friend Franklin D. Roosevelt was a *Destiny Reservist*.

President Roosevelt believed in the collective destiny of a generation, and in his acceptance speech of the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 1936, he declared: "There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation has a rendezvous with destiny." Of course, within the destiny of an individual or group is their choice to accept that destiny and meet its requirements or not accept that responsibility and default in meeting their destiny at that moment in time and space.

As there was a time for the black race of South Africa to begin to find its proper destiny of discovering their place of citizenship with equal opportunities in South Africa (with the ending of apartheid), so too does the black race of the U.S. have a destiny of moving out of marginalization into full acceptance with equal rights, which has culminated with a black U.S. President now serving his second term of office. But this progress began decades (even generations) before Barack Obama was elected to the highest office in our nation. In a 1984 speech at the Democratic Na-

tional Convention, civil rights activist and Christian minister Jesse Jackson referred to the destiny of the black race coming into their proper place as citizens when he stated: "Our time has come! No lie can live forever. Our time has come. We must leave the racial battleground and come to the economic common ground and the moral high ground. America, our time has come!"

I think that the human race does command its own destiny and that that destiny can eventually embrace the stars.

— Lorraine Hansberry,  
U.S. writer

A much beloved and well-known leader in activism against the tyranny of corporate-controlled media, politics, and economics, Noam Chomsky, spoke of the destiny of our entire world, which will be determined by the decision of humankind. He warned: "At this stage of History either one of two things is possible: either the general population will take control of its own destiny and will concern itself with community interests, guided by values of solidarity and sympathy and concern for others; or alternately, there will be no destiny for anyone to control. As long as some specialized class is in a position of authority, it is going to set policy in the special interests that it serves. But the conditions of survival, let alone justice, require rational social planning in the interests of the community as a whole, and by now, that means Global Community."

The meaning of destiny then has many layers and levels. There is the personal destiny of an individual that, if divinely-led, is in some manner related to a collective destiny of others and always contributive to the true progress of civilization. Nations have a destiny to evolve into higher more just forms of governments based on divine-administration principles, eventually outgrowing nationalistic values that use policies and practices (like colonialism) to basically control and exploit other nations and peoples. The destiny of nations and governments on this world are to move into a cooperative coordination among each other that benefits all of humanity, thus manifesting worldwide brotherhood/sisterhood.

Rodan of Alexandria, a Greek philosopher of Jesus' time understood that fulfilling destiny on a world such as ours would not be a perfectly harmonious process, personally or collectively. But besides seeing destiny as something to strive for on an earthly level, he realized that there was much more to an individual's destiny than just realizing goals on this world. He understood that it went beyond a person's life here in



Photo by Eddi Van W

material form but continued after physical death in an ascension to the perfection of Paradise realization.

In a continually changing world, in the midst of an evolving social order, it is impossible to maintain settled and established goals of destiny. Stability of personality can be experienced only by those who have discovered and embraced the living God as the eternal goal of infinite attainment. And thus to transfer one's goal from time to eternity, from earth to Paradise, from the human to the divine, requires that man shall become regenerated, converted, be born again; that he shall become the re-created child of the divine spirit. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Most evolutionary religions<sup>2</sup> have some level of understanding that the destiny of an individual is to become a better person—on this world and in the afterlife beyond physical death. Some even have an inkling that the goal is Paradise, but there is so much misunderstanding and confusion about all of this that severe distortions have manifested throughout human history, resulting in some religious extremists thinking God wants them to maim and murder “infidels” and other people who just happen to be in the path of their destruction, which is the opposite of what the Universal Father desires of His created beings. “. . . God is the source and destiny of all that is good and beautiful and true.”<sup>3</sup>

Revelatory religion,<sup>4</sup> as is found in *The URANTIA Book*, gives a cosmic view of destiny that is far-reaching—involving the unfoldment of the master universe that includes the nucleus Paradise, the central universe of Havona, and the seven superuniverses of time and space, which encompasses millions of local universes, constellations, and systems with billions of life-inhabited worlds. And we individual mortals are a part of the destiny of that cosmic unfoldment, within our individual destinies here on earth! In one of his poems “To A Child,” nineteenth-century American author Henry Wadsworth Longfellow refers to this sense of an all-pervading destiny embracing us humans: “. . . of the great world of light that lies behind all human destinies.”

In this context: “. . . Man's true destiny consists in the creation of new and spirit goals and then in responding to the cosmic allurements of such supernal goals of nonmaterial value.”<sup>5</sup> So building our character (or soul)—through our thinking, feeling, and doing—is our first and foremost destiny on this world. All other degrees of right destiny manifest on that basic foundation. Humans are called to answer the “spiritual summons” that is innate within all of us—“calling to the best there is in man to rise above all these legacies of animal evolution and by grace attain the moral heights of true human destiny.”<sup>6</sup>

Another way to see this is to understand that our primal destiny as human beings is to unfold into the God-gifted personality pattern that is unique for each one of us. As American educator Erik H. Erikson stated: “Personality, too, is destiny.” Or, as *The URANTIA Book* states in its very first paper: “. . . The Universal Father is the acme of divine personality; he is the origin and destiny of personality throughout all creation. . . .”<sup>7</sup> Simultaneously, we begin to fulfill the destiny of responding to our innate desire to know God and have Him/Her know us. “The Divine Creator is also the Universal Disposer, the source and destiny of souls.”<sup>8</sup>

In the end, the personal destiny for each of us mortals is to become God-like. From where we sit, this may seem impossible, but it isn't, given we're provided with much time to achieve this beyond our physical life on this world. “. . . This possibility of the attainment of divine perfection is the final and certain destiny of all mortals' eternal spiritual progress.”<sup>9</sup>

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Meanwhile...we are here on earth, a world of great beauty that is in dire straits due to too many generations of individuals, social systems, and governments not meeting their destiny to contribute to the evolution of humankind and civilization within divine pattern. In closing, I would like

to share a poem by a writer who also has an article in this issue of the *Alternative Voice*, Clistine Morningstar. Her poem speaks of her destiny being deeply tied to Mother Earth's in a pattern of relationship and interdependence.

## Roots

Standing on the firm belly of my mother  
I'm anchored into mysteries way down beneath the dirt.  
Huge spinning wheels are turning,  
And as my mother sings the ageless melodies of wind and water  
The thread of dreams is being spun.  
The seeds, the spores, the fallen nuts,  
Hear it, and begin to sprout.  
Mushrooms, moss, and mighty trees emerge  
Each in their own time.

And I, a listener on the surface, start to form my own roots  
Down, down, into the secret places of creation.  
Then and only then am I connected  
To all this vast green and growing family:  
I long for peace and sunlight and my own growing space.

And so I pause to listen in again  
But now I hear beneath it all  
The deep, sad music of a broken earth,  
The pain of countless particles  
Whose code is being deleted or disturbed.  
And so I cannot settle for a safe, sequestered spot  
In this endangered garden.  
Instead I wander through the undergrowth  
And seek the restoration of the pattern.

I hear my mother sigh.  
The spinning wheels are turning slowly now,  
She needs another million million helpers  
Who choose to venerate the great equation,  
The sacred synergy of taking out and giving back—  
The planet holds its breath.

- 1 *The URANTIA Book*, Paper 160, Section 1, Paragraph 14
- 2 Evolutionary religions include the various religions of the world that evolved throughout history from human perceptions and ideas about God, other celestial personalities, and the cosmos and containing both some truths and falsehoods. Evolutionary religions are in contrast to revelatory religion (information given by God and celestial personalities directly to mortals).
- 3 *The URANTIA Book*, Paper 130, Section 2, Paragraph 7
- 4 Revelatory religion is information given (revealed) by God and celestial personalities directly to mortals. Revelatory religion contrasts evolutionary religions, which contain both some truths and falsehoods.
- 5 *The URANTIA Book*, Paper 12, Section 9, Paragraph 1
- 6 Ibid, Paper 195, Section 9, Paragraph 9
- 7 Ibid, Paper 1, Section 5, Paragraph 1
- 8 Ibid, Paper 2, Section 1, Paragraph 2
- 9 Ibid, Paper 1, Introduction, Paragraph 4

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