

## To Aspire and Inspire

**John Gray:** Media pundits have a lot to say about AI, Artificial Intelligence, these days. Some espouse its virtues and potential; others express alarm about its dangers; most are baffled by the technology. Something that was once just science fiction is starting to become fact.

I'm sure it's not lost on us that *artificial* is the adjective form of the word *artifice*, of course. An online dictionary defines artifice as "clever or cunning devices or expedients, especially as used to trick or deceive others." Instead of something artificial—mind-made, contrived, unoriginal, and designed to deceive—how about *Actual* Intelligence? That's the true AI!

The evidence of actual intelligence is what human beings are designed to deliver: the merger of spirit and form flowing into dimensional expression as inspired thoughts, feelings, actions, and words. I'm thinking aloud here; come to think of it, thinking is not only *allowed*—it's essential!

Lucifer, "light bearer," aptly names the divinely designed human mind. This right mind is a realm of inspired vision and creativity, where spiritual light-seeds germinate, grow and emerge into visibility. The darkened mind is a space of deceit and prevarication in which everything is seen in small, narrow, self-serving, self-centered ways. It's more evident than ever these days that so very many people are not in their right minds! Lucifer describes the human consciousness in what's called heaven—the vast sphere of light composed of many finer ranges of spiritual substance, all of which are here, now. At least in theory if not in fact, we recognize that this is the truly natural state of consciousness: awake in heaven!

It doesn't take a bright mind to recognize that using something for a purpose other than its intended design, damages it. To illustrate with an exaggeration, were I to use a crystal goblet as a hammer, how would that go for the goblet? The magnificent human mind is rendered almost entirely inoperable for its real purpose when it's in the wrong hands and used for wrong purposes. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground... For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell..." (Isaiah 14:12-15) So wrote the fiery prophet Isaiah long ago in an ancient document.

"How art thou fallen..." Years ago, when comedian Bill Cosby used to be funny, he quipped, "Don't worry about senility. When you're senile, you won't know it!" The fallen

mind doesn't know how darkened it is. It's ignorant while imagining it's smart; its function is mostly artificial. Let's lift up our heads and exhibit *actual* intelligence!

For a while I've mused at times about two words: *aspire* and *inspire*. Both English words contain the same Latin root, *spirare*, ["spy-eray"] meaning, "to breathe."

A literal root meaning of *aspire* is *to pant after*. Common synonyms include crave, pursue, strive, yearn, desire, wish, hope, and its dictionary definition is, "to long, aim, or earnestly seek ambitiously; be eagerly and sincerely desirous, especially for something great or of high value." I think of yearning upward. Thankfulness, joy, passion, reverence, love, yieldedness, worship. These and other words describe open-hearted response to what is higher: *Aspiration!*

The word *inspire's* roots mean *to breathe into*. Some synonyms are animate, cause, motivate, stir, activate. A dictionary definition is, "to fill with an animating, quickening, or exalting influence."

Probably, like me, you are reminded of the famous line early in the Book of Genesis: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen 2:7) The presence of the LORD God inspires and animates responsive humans into living souls. Who is the Lord God who is doing this creative breathing? We recognize that in the individual sense, the Lord God is the incarnate one, the god being or angel, the individual source and focus of life that spiritualizes this human form, this marvelous "dust of the ground." In the aggregate sense, the Lord God is the Supreme One for this world, incarnate in the whole body of humankind—the body that was and is created to be His body on earth—as well as the planet itself.

*Respiration*—breathing—is of the same Latin root as *aspiration* and *inspiration*. Breathing is a rhythmic and repetitive process of two parts: exhale, inhale, exhale, inhale... Air moves both ways, out and then in. And we know that in the Bible, air symbolizes spirit. Our bodies know that the Lord God breathes our every breath!

The 24<sup>th</sup> Psalm, which opens, "The earth is the Lord's...." also includes other verses I feel are especially relevant to our thinking today:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." (Psalm 24:7)

This statement is almost exactly repeated two verses later:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." (Psalm 24:9)

The difference between the two wordings may seem subtle, but I find it revealing.

Verse 7: “be ye lifted up”—is spoken to the one being lifted, to the one acted upon. This is a command to *aspire*. Respond, rise up!

Verse 9: “even lift them up”—is spoken to one doing the lifting—the one causing the rising up. This is a command to *inspire*. Radiate love!

We may see aspiration and inspiration as two aspects of a single process described for many of us by the term, the One Law. It begins with acknowledging the forever-fact of the presence of God, the source of creative radiation, of life. The next phase of the one process is response to that—openness to and love for that radiation—which naturally and quickly develops into attraction toward what is loved. The ultimate fulfillment of attraction is union. In union, radiation is greatly increased, amplified by many orders of magnitude. In brief then, radiation, response, attraction, union, and unified radiation together describe the phases of one process. I’m using the word *aspiration* to relate to the response and attraction aspects of the process, and the word *inspiration* to the union and unified radiation aspects. The 7<sup>th</sup> verse of the 24<sup>th</sup> Psalm encapsulates it all clearly in our bright minds: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors—*aspire!*—and the King of glory shall come in—*inspire!*”

The “King of glory”—the reality of being—cannot come in and be known without passionate aspiration for Her or His presence. And the world cannot be lifted up and restored to order and to beauty without the King having the means to inspire it, to breathe anew the breath of life into the collective “dust” of humanity and all creation.

Do we know these things? Yes, certainly we do. Perhaps we know them with greater intensity and clarity in times like we are sharing right now. Generation after generation, people fervently aspire to great things—maybe religiously, but also financially and positionally and in every other way. To fulfill the divine purpose for which we live, true aspiration is absolutely necessary; but it is not, in and of itself, sufficient. There must also be consummation in union and unified radiation—the evidence of the presence of the King of glory coming in and coming through, in every moment. As our human heads and gates and doors are lifted up into union, the individual god beings we are fill our hearts and permeate our consciousness. And the light bearer, Lucifer, is restored to heaven and goes no more out.

Let’s rest in silence for a minute, sensing the eminent presence of the King of glory.

The larger collective purpose is fulfilled as we know this experience not only individually but all together. Let us live that the great King of glory comes fully into the world of human experience now. This is not a future event. The King and His kingdom are at hand. We’ve been parts of it all since the beginning!

In a recent correspondence with some dear friends, I wrote a paragraph I wish to share with you, as I consider all of you dear friends too.

“Yes, each of us is unique in our focalization of spirit and factors. I may know with full assurance the qualities of truth I bring, and those qualities are not identical to anyone else's. We experience in mind and heart our already-existing heavenly agreement as we each freely express our Selves while deeply appreciating each other's unique expression. One person's clear vision for themselves doesn't mean the same is so for anyone else. We can trust that and trust one another as the Lord trusts us. We are each a differentiation of His great Love, after all and before all. In the outer sense we prove this by our unreserved love and generosity for one another.”

Love for the Lord is sacred aspiration. Without that, there is nothing. Love for one another and for the world is not a platitude; it is inspirational. May we be truly, deeply thankful for one another and always accepting of how very thankful the Lord is for us! Let us stay together where we are, where He is.

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### **Pre-Service Music**

*Violin Concerto in E Major, BWV 1042: I. Allegro*

Composed by J.S. Bach and performed by the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra

### **Concluding Music**

*1. Psalm 24: The Earth is the Lord's*

Composed by John Barnby and performed the Westminster Abbey Choir

*2. Messiah, HWV 56, Pt. 2: Lift up your heads, O ye gates – Chorus*

Composed by George Frideric Handel and performed by The Sixteen