

The Next Chapter

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(Shortwave broadcast: Roll 'Simple Gifts' id)

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Hello Team Humanity. I'm Roland B. Hunt and you're listening to The Next Chapter. (Theme up, then under for:)

The Next Chapter looks at where we seem to be headed as a species on this little blue planet, do we really want to go there, and what are our options? On today's broadcast we'll examine more closely the role of religion and spirituality in the modern world. We'll take an objective look at some controversial ideas like reincarnation and mysticism. We'll look at some dangerous new trends now appearing in world economics and politics, and we'll close with some thoughts about the greatest revolution of all, when we as homo sapiens will be able to consciously control our genetic destiny.

The Next Chapter is about ideas. It's not about any particular religion, or joining some movement or cause, or buying gold coins or land in Belize. But if you want intellectual adventure, if you like trying to answer tough questions and solve tough problems, you've come to the right place. And if you go away from this broadcast without feeling challenged or even annoyed by some of what you've heard then I have failed in my effort to rattle cages and stimulate original thinking. We live in a dangerous age but also one full of opportunity to advance humankind to our fullest potential. Let's seize that opportunity while we still can.

Before we get started though let's quickly review the ground rules we follow on the Next Chapter. First, we don't do religion on this program. I'm not a theologian and make no claims to be one. And whatever you hear on The Next Chapter has nothing to do with somebody's idea of 'Biblical prophecy'. Spirituality is not the same thing as religion. On The Next Chapter we will from time to time talk about the spiritual dimension of life but we'll leave theology to others. Everyone is welcome here though, whether you're a fundamentalist believer, militant atheist, or anywhere in between.

Second, The Next Chapter doesn't pay much attention to conspiracy theories, Big Foot, UFOs, or who killed JFK. I keep an open mind on these subjects and once in awhile I might touch on them but generally I let George Noory, Alex Jones, and others carry the black briefcase on such matters.

Third, we have no nothing to sell here. No books, no MREs, no gold coins, no land in Central America. We might look at the pros and cons of owning gold, what are the best shortwave receivers on the markt, or if you're thinking of moving overseas, what factors you need to consider. But in the end its up to you to do your own homework and make your own decisions.

Fourth and last, The Next Chapter should not be considered for or against any government. After living and working for much of my adult life in more than a dozen poor and often war-torn nations, I've come to the conclusion that all governments, ours included, are going to do whatever it takes to keep themselves in power. That's what governments do. What we as individuals do though is up to us, not blind, impersonal historical forces...or men in black.

Unlike our ancient ancestors who lived day to day and had no way to anticipate mega-

disasters, now we not only anticipate and plan for them, we humans can and have built vast underground bunkers in many countries that will allow thousands of humans to live underground for years until conditions on the surface improve. The US has them. So do the Russians and the Chinese.

Switzerland reportedly has bunkers that can shelter its entire population of eight million for up to two years. That kind of capability is a game changer but it doesn't alter the reality that our species has come up against some extremely dangerous problems for which we currently appear to have no solutions. Weapons of mass destruction, bioterrorism, and mass unemployment caused by the rise of intelligent machines are just three examples. So if for whatever reason modern civilization does pass into history, there will be survivors. The question is, will those who come after us be able to learn from our mistakes and not repeat them?

The Next Chapter is for the elite but in this case the elite is self selecting. It's anyone who enjoys thinking deeply about serious issues. Some listeners may find some of the subjects we talk about on this broadcast disturbing but you can be sure that elites in governments and private research institutes around the world are also thinking about these issues. Our goal is to bring as many people as possible into the conversation. In a complex technological society we can't hope to meet tomorrow's challenges unless we understand them. (pause for stations carrying a newscast to rejoin)

From time to time I get emails from listeners with valuable ideas to share. Mark in Massachusetts wrote in to suggest that maybe I would turn off people by making very strong assertions about the changes I see coming for us humans. Jeff in upstate NY has forwarded a number of news articles about how this world seems to be getting totally out of our control. Robotic armed drones, world leaders making threatening gestures in an already tense Middle East and the possibility of cyber attacks that could cripple modern societies are just a few of the threats that make you wonder just how much longer this current civilization can last.

They're all valid concerns and they deserve our attention. In past years I used to think more in 'survivalist' terms but now I've come to the conclusion that there are just so many variables that predicting the future in any detail is impossible. So I decided to in effect 'shotgun it' with The Next Chapter, putting out lots of ideas and letting folks think it all through for themselves. Naturally people with different values and different priorities will reach different conclusions.

From my perspective that's fine. As I say on every broadcast Radio Alexandria is not the fountain of all truth. We're all about searching for the truth, wherever it may be. Life's an adventure, full of twists and turns, triumphs and tragedies, climbing the mountain, and enjoying the view from the summit. As a famous American statesman once said, "You can't really appreciate the mountain tops until you've experienced the valleys." (And of course he was probably quoting some long dead philosopher.)

As you listen to The Next Chapter, especially those segments dealing with predicting the future, you'll note that I hit these themes over and over. Soviet submarine officer Vasili Arkhipov saves the world from global thermonuclear war. An obscure archduke is assassinated in Sarajevo, triggering World War I. A young Winston Churchill severely injures his shoulder so he can't weld a saber in the last full cavalry charge of the British Army in the Sudan. Instead he is armed with a pistol which almost certainly saved his life. And on and on.

That's not to say that you cannot make any valid predictions about the future, just that you cannot, in my opinion, make precise or detailed predictions.

As for myself I try to make some kind of useful contribution to the popular discussion of events and their meaning at this particular moment in 4-dimensional spacetime. Whether they have any real value is something others must judge.

I am moderately optimistic about humanity's future but it's likely to be quite different from today. School is in. There are lessons to be learned and skills to be mastered before we, as both a biological species and perhaps as spiritual entities, can graduate to the next level.

For today's program I have decided to spend less time on mundane things like politics and government and devote more of the program to thinking about the spiritual dimension of life. There are some important events going on in the world right now that cannot be ignored and I will report on them but we're going to save that for later in the broadcast.

As regular listeners know we don't do religion on The Next Chapter. Religion and spirituality however are not the same thing. Religions have specific doctrines and traditions. They represent theories of ultimate reality. But Spirituality is something else entirely. It is tied in closely with a mystical or metaphysical interpretation of human reality, beyond space and time and the five senses.

Now there are plenty of people who think both religion and mysticism are pure bunk. These generally are the militant atheists, who believe all religions are fairy tales and not something any serious, rational person of today should take seriously. At the other end of the ideological spectrum are the religious fundamentalists who choose to take religious scripture literally and who try to make the world conform to that vision of reality.

So in a very real sense both of these groups have already decided in advance what the truth is and are not open to new evidence. They are locked into an ideology or world view in which the truth is already known and only evidence that fits that ideology can be accepted. My test question for all of these folks is this: Is there any evidence that could be presented that would make you change your mind?

If the answer is 'no' then there is no point wasting time trying to reason with them. When people reject rational discourse it's time to leave them in their feel good security blankets and move on to more productive pursuits. So in essence my worldview says we're part of a material world with particles and dimensions and a phenomenon we call time. But the world we perceive with the five senses is only part of the story. It's just one level of consciousness.

The reason I take seriously the idea that there are other levels of consciousness beyond the five senses is because there is substantial, and in my judgment, credible evidence to support it. The same with a multiple life or reincarnational interpretation of human existence. I am perfectly willing to debate these positions with anyone. We can look at the evidence, debate its validity, and let those listening decide who makes the more convincing case.

There's a reason I'm taking up the subject of reincarnation and it has to do with our ability as humans in the here and now to direct our future. Do we have free will or is everything preordained? The answer I believe is...some of both.

I'll have more to say on that in a moment, but first let's take one of my favorite examples of evidence of reincarnation and test out what I have just said. The whole issue of reincarnation is a really tough one for both militant atheists and fundamentalist believers. Why? Because to accept the idea that we come to this earth many times to learn new lessons before returning to some higher nonphysical dimension would cause each of their core belief systems to collapse.

The problem for the militant materialists is if you accept any of this reincarnational stuff where does it end? Do we also have to accept angels and miracles? How about leprecauns and

fares?

So it is completely understandable that people who have a deep emotional commitment to a particular set of beliefs would have a hard time, even a fear, of facing the fact that they might have to totally rethink their view of the world.

And perhaps the most compelling reason of all, to even contemplate such a view could risk condemnation and rejection by their closest friends and family.

But that doesn't mean you cannot think about these issues in the privacy of your own mind. I personally happen to think there is abundant evidence that reincarnation accurately describes how humans experience life in four dimensional space-time, but I will admit there is always the possibility that the materialists are correct.

Maybe we do really live life only once and when we die we get buried in the ground and that's the end of it. That point of view doesn't bother me in the least. I can accept either theory. I just think those who argue against a multiple life interpretation of reality either haven't seriously considered all the evidence or they are just not willing to put up with the consequences of admitting such a possibility.

So, let's take, for example, the story of young James Leininger as described in the book *Soul Survivor*. I have always thought that this case contains some of the most powerful evidence in support of reincarnation but I went to Amazon to check the reviews to see if any skeptics had come up with convincing evidence to discredit the story presented by the parents, Bruce and Andrea Leininger.

Out of more than 200 reviews, most of them very positive, just about all of the negative ones complain about the writing and the way the story is told but not about the facts of the case.

So it looks as though the reincarnation skeptics have decided they can't win this one. All their standard arguments about fabrication and conspiracy and vagueness and lack of proof just don't work. So they have decided, wisely in my view, to let this one go by. For the skeptics the best statement is the most simple and honest one: "We have no explanation for the phenomena described."

The story of little James Leininger has gotten a lot of media attention, most notably on ABC's Good Morning America. When he was two years old and just learning to speak, his mother Andrea took him to a toy store and while there happened to hand him a small model of a World War II fighter. "Look" she said, "it even has a bomb on the bottom." The two year old turned the toy over and corrected his mom. "That's not a bomb. That's a dwop tank, Mommy".

Andrea had no idea what a dwop tank was until she got home and consulted with her husband Bruce. Bruce realized right away that his son was trying to say 'drop tank', an extra fuel tank World War II planes carried to extend their flying range. When the tank was empty the pilot would push a button and drop it. How would a two year old still in diapers know that, the Leiningers wondered?

Soon afterward little James began having severe and recurring nightmares in which he kept screaming "Plane on fire, Little man can't get out". At first his parents could not make heads nor tails of his behavior. Both Bruce and Andrea were conservative Christians and definitely not very open to the idea of reincarnation. But when the nightmares continued the child's grandmother suspected it might be a case of remembering experiences from a previous life and suggested to Andrea that she contact some prominent researchers in the field of children and past life memory.

Over a period of several years young James was able to remember a few details of a

previous life as a World War II navy fighter pilot named James Huston, Jr. who was shot down over the Pacific during the battle of Iwo Jima. After years of research the Leiningers were able to track down surviving crew members of his ship and eventually his sister Anne, all of them now advanced in age. They confirmed all of what little James Leininger had described. In the case of the elderly sister young James displayed a knowledge of the Huston family so intimate that only she would have been able to confirm its accuracy, which she did.

One of the strongest skeptics of James's story was his own father. One by one the assertions by young James were proven to be correct but the one that kept evading proof was his description of flying the Corsair fighter and its excentricities. Official naval records showed that he had been shot down while piloting what was called a Wildcat fighter. There was no evidence to connect Lt. Huston with Corsairs, which had not be flown off the deck of the Natoma Bay.

And then finally one day a photo was found of James Huston standing beside a Corsair. It turned out that he had never flown one in combat but he had served as a test pilot when they were first introduced by the Navy in the Pacific in 1944. And that of course is why he would have had such a detailed knowledge of their flight characteristics.

My favorite part of the book is at the end when James and his parents were attending a reunion of pilots from the Natoma Bay, Lt. Huston's ship. A tall elderly man in a polo shirt walked up to Andrea and young James, now five years old, and asked, "Do you know who I am?"

James looked him in the eye, thought for a second, and replied, "You're Bob Greenwalt." The man looked shocked. He laughed a little nervously and said, "That's right."

Andrea asked, "Are you really Bob Greenwalt?" And he said yes.

Later, in their room, Bruce asked his son, "How did you know that?"

"I recognized his voice," young James replied.

If you would like to learn more about children and their ability to remember previous lives you should check out several volumes published on the subject by Carol Bowman. Dr. Brian Weiss is another popular author in this field and of course the most famous of all is the late Ian Stevenson, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Virginia, whose 'Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation' set the stage for all the many studies that have followed.

What all of these researchers focused on were accounts of previous lives with enough details that could be verified by historical records. That's why the case of James Leininger was so striking. Obscure detail after obscure detail was eventually proved to be correct.

Now there are always going to be a few diehard skeptics who will claim conspiracy. Well, if there were such a such a conspiracy you're going to have to explain how hundreds of people could be involved. You're also going to have to explain why James Leininger's parents, both evangelical Christians who were most assuredly not friendly to the idea of reincarnation, would fabricate something in direct contravention to their religious beliefs.

My advice to the diehards. Just admit that it doesn't fit into your worldview, that you have no explanation for the facts as presented, and move on.

Turning to another approach for studying reincarnation, clinical psychologist Dr. Ellen Wambach hypnotically regressed over a thousand adults over a period of years to see what if anything they could remember about past lifetimes. As a test to see if the results she was getting were valid she expected that if her subjects were just making up past life experiences that they would remember being white, male, rich, and famous.

Her logic was that being white is more prestigious in most of the western world, that

males both in the past and today usually enjoy more power and freedom in their everyday lives than females, that most people would certainly prefer to remember a previous life in which they were wealthy rather than poor, and finally people would prefer to think they were famous in a past life instead of being just a peasant, what we might call the Napoleon complex.

As it turned out none of those assumptions proved correct. Many of Wambach's subjects remembered lives as other races, overwhelmingly most of the lives remembered were those of poor people, poorly clothed and often poorly fed. Likewise many remembered being of a different gender in some of their past lives. Interestingly overall the gender ratio worked out to almost fifty fifty with a slight edge toward males, just as it is in real life. Lastly almost no one remembered a lifetime of any fame or prominence.

And if that were not enough proof of Wambach's past life regression technique, she asked her subjects while under hypnosis to describe their clothing and shoes, what they ate, and other details about their surroundings. When checked against available anthropological records these too proved to be uncannily accurate.

So the available evidence appears to strongly support reincarnation. If we do spend many lifetimes on this Earth what does that say about our freedom to choose how we live and how we interact with others? Is everything predestined or do we have free will?

Actually I think it may be some of both. We come to each lifetime both individually and collectively, to learn personal lessons and also lessons as a group. Shakespeare was right when he said 'all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players.'

If we are minor players, extras if you will, we have a lot of freedom to act as we wish because our actions will not impact the outcome of the play. If we play more important roles, if we are more important to the script, then we must surrender some of our freedom, some of our free will.

So the Winston Churchills, and Hitlers, and FDRs had a lot less individual freedom because they chose to play the starring roles in the play. But what does that say about the play itself? Is the script written in stone, immutable, unchangeable?

Well maybe...but we really don't know for sure. And in the end does it really matter? Some things in life we can control. Others we cannot. If we cherish freedom, seek wisdom, and manifest kindness in our everyday lives, have we not done our best to improve the lot of humankind and the well being of our planet, always remembering that cherishing freedom and seeking wisdom may sometimes require heroic self-sacrifice.

Let's take a break here and when we come back we'll think some more about who we are as a species and where we are going. I'm Roland B. Hunt and you're listening to the Next Chapter, a production of the North American Service of Radio Alexandria.

Promo - Radio Alexandria

Feedback is important here at Radio Alexandria so I hope you will take the time to email or write and share your ideas. Did you find yourself agreeing in part and disagreeing in part? Did we make you cheer or did you want to throw some-thing at the radio? The whole point of Radio Alexandria and The Next Chapter is to get people to thinking. Send us an email and tell us your opinions. Please be concise and to the point. We can't respond personally to every email but we with your permission we may include some of your comments and ideas in future broadcasts. You'll only be identified by first name and the name of the state, or province, or region you're writing from. The email address is radioshipalexandria at yahoo.com. That's

radioshipalexandria at yahoo.com.

Radio Alexandria is named after the greatest library in the ancient world, one that was founded several hundred years before the common era. That center of learning was burned to the ground by religious zealots in the fifth century AD so almost all of its books were lost to posterity. Radio Alexandria's mission is to make sure that doesn't happen again. The goal is to spread ideas far and wide across the globe to the remotest village and mountain top, ideas about government, society, and the future of our species on this planet.

As a radio station we can't physically spread the great books of today but we can share the ideas contained within them. Our goal is not to tell listeners what to think but how to think, how to use logic and evidence to make rational decisions about the future drawing upon lessons learned from the past.

We live in a busy world so if you tuned in late or have to leave early you can always listen to today's program as a podcast. Just go to radioalexandria dot net and click on programs. Transcripts of all the programs in The Next Chapter series are also available on the website. Once again the web address is radioalexandria dot net. If you have comments or questions our email address is radioshipalexandria at yahoo dot com. That's radioshipalexandria at yahoo.com.

One more reminder. Radio Alexandria is in the demonstration of concept phase right now. We're distributing our programming domestically on FM and internationally on shortwave radio while we evaluate the feasibility of buying and equipping a radio ship and deploying it to the central Pacific.

If you know something about shortwave you've probably already figured out why we would choose such a location. It has to do with the physics of shortwave broadcasting. Unlike conventional AM or FM radio, a shortwave signal can travel thousands of miles by bouncing off a layer of charged particles in the atmosphere called the ionosphere. The signal may bounce between the earth (or sea) and the ionosphere several times before reaching an audience 5,000 or even 10,000 miles away. Sea water to a shortwave signal is like a polished glass mirror compared to a very dirty windshield. It is a thousand times more reflective than ordinary earth. If you want to put a powerful radio signal into Pacific Rim countries like China and Russia using medium sized shortwave transmitters there is no better location than the central Pacific.

The reason for putting Radio Alexandria on a ship is safety. Pacific islands may bring to mind swaying palm trees and white sandy beaches but the reality is the Pacific can be a dangerous place, what with volcanoes, typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The place to ride those out is not at anchor in a harbor. A small ship like a converted trawler or lightship can put to sea on short notice and has the endurance to withstand severe punishment on the open ocean.

The programs you hear now are typical of what you will hear if we decide to go ahead with the next phase but first we need to know if there will be enough listeners to justify such a large project. If you have some ideas or suggestions for foundations or other organizations which might fund a project like Radio Alexandria please feel free to share them with us. Also we're accepting donations from listeners so if you would like to support our efforts to build a more enlightened world just go to radioalexandria dot net, click on 'programs', and then the 'donate' button.

Right now our greatest out of pocket expense is paying for airtime. If we had additional funding we could buy more airtime to beam Radio Alexandria into Europe and Russia. The longer term plan is to offer The Next Chapter not only in English but in other languages as well. The goal is not to gettled in the domestic politics of countries. They have to solve their own

problems. What we at Radio Alexandria are trying to do is look at issues all modern governments are confronting and see if there might be some common solutions.

Transparency is such an issue. It's won of the best ways to combat political corruption & boost popular confidence in democratic government. There's a major anti-corruption campaign going on in China right now because the current administration understands that they're not going to be able to keep the Mandate of Heaven unless they govern responsibly.

The USA is also suffering from a major lack of public confidence in its political institutions. Polls show that less than ten percent of Americans have a favorable opinion of Congress, largely because of the influence of lobbyists.

One of the big problems with the US system is legislation with provisions slipped in at the last minute to favor this industry or that special interest. Most of that could be halted instantly if every single provision of every bill had to have a legislator's name attached to it. No more provisions just magically appearing out of nowhere and slipped into legislation drawn up in conference committee without floor debate.

This problem with transparency in the legislative process is specific to the American system but I'm sure other systems in other nations have similar issues. Perhaps solutions have been tried, some of which worked and others that did not, but these are the kinds of issues we like to explore on Radio Alexandria.

In the coming months we may try some crowd funding to begin raising the money to implement these plans. In the meantime all of you as listeners can do your part by spreading the word. Tell your friends about our website, transcripts, and podcasts. Also the podcasts are available free for rebroadcast on non-commercial stations in the US. If you'd like to see The Next Chapter more widely available in your community tell your local community or public station about us.

If you see something you think your friends would find interesting, copy it off the website and share it with others. Maybe you see something you disagree with. That's fine too. Radio Alexandria is not the source of all truth. We're all about looking *for* the truth, wherever it may be and whether or not it's politically correct.

By the way free Radio Alexandria buttons are now available so if you'd like one just send us your mailing address and we'll get one off to you. You can see a sample on our website radioalexandria dot net. Just click on resources. The buttons are an experiment so supplies are limited. Our email address once again is radio shipalexandria at yahoo dot com.

If you find value in what we are trying to do and would like to help financially just go to radioalexandria dot net, click on programs and then the donate button. Any financial assistance you chose to make will be gratefully appreciated. Radio Alexandria is radio for the future. (end promo)

Before the break we were talking about religion, spirituality, and controversial topics like reincarnation and a multiple life interpretation of human reality. I want to reassure our militant materialist listeners that I have no problem with their resistance to anything smacking of what they see as paranormal. One can operate out of a purely materialist ideology if that's what makes you happy.

My point is that if you are truly committed to finding the truth you have to honestly consider all the evidence out there before coming to a final judgment. And there is some pretty darn good evidence out there that phenomena seemingly outside the realm of four dimensional space-time, outside the laws of the physical universe as we understand them, have validity and

therefore must be taken seriously.

Unfortunately I think that all too often in these matters we see more emotion than reason. It becomes a sociology of knowledge problem. If we allow even an inch on this paranormal stuff, goes the typical reaction of establishment science, in no time we'll be back to the dark ages and witches and demons, and the evil eye. So we have to maintain a united front and not admit the slightest doubt in a totally materialist explanation to everything we perceive in the physical world.

Of course the only problem with that kind of self assured arrogance is that physicists now admit they can't account for 97 percent of all the matter in the universe. Sure the scientific laws work pretty good for what we can see, stars and galaxies and the like. It's just that they are incapable of explaining why the universe is expanding when it should be contracting. Little problems like that.

So physicists have come up with a solution: dark matter and dark energy. It's just that no one has ever seen or detected either dark matter or dark energy, and even worse, the last I heard, no one has the faintest idea how even go about detecting either. Now if that were not bad enough, there is another giant hole in the standard model that physicists prize so highly. Matter can interact instantaneously with other matter even if its on the other side of the universe. The phenomenon is called 'entanglement' and its been demonstrated repeatedly in the laboratory so this is not some fluke in the data or a problem in the experimental design.

Albert Einstein saw it coming and called it 'spooky action at a distance.' He didn't like the idea one bit but with advances in our ability to measure time and very fast objects it has been confirmed so completely as to be generally accepted in the scientific community. So currently we see particles interacting with each other at twenty-thousand times the speed of light. And that number just represents the upper limit of our current measurement capability. The mathematics indicate that the interaction will be instantaneous which is to say that time does not apply. It is irrelevant.

Remember what you learned in school, that nothing can travel faster than the speed of light? Scientists have come up with an ingenious solution to this little problem. Particles cannot travel faster than the speed of light but waves can.

Well wait a minute. I thought Louis deBroglie won a Nobel prize for proving that matter and energy are just different expressions of the same thing, that matter going through a physical grating behaves just like light going through a lens.

Now all you physicists out there are free to email me to explain the subtleties of the wave/particle connection but my point is that it is overwhelmingly clear that some very big holes are being punched in what we thought we knew for certain about the universe. So before you go around insisting that all phenomena that appear to violate the laws of space and time are mystical bunk, maybe it might behoove you to be just a little bit more humble when you can't even answer some very basic questions about the field you are supposed to know so much about.

In short go back to trying to explain the world of the five senses and leave questions outside the physical world to the philosophers. That's what Max Planck, the father of quantum mechanics, argued for and I think he was right.

Mysticism is not religion but a path to knowledge beyond the physical world. although most all religions have a mystical side or branch. The popular religions of today (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, etc.), may be viewed as specific theories of Ultimate Reality. They all make specific statements - some empirically testable, many others not - about people and events

in the physical world and how these related to God, or Allah, or All That Is, or some similar term.

Mysticism on the other hand is not a religion but a path to understanding. It has nothing to do with religious creeds or doctrines, or whether or not there is a personal God, and certainly nothing to do with science which is something else entirely. Mystics simply assert that on the basis of personal experience that there is another level or levels of consciousness beyond that of the five senses. Through rigorous mental practice they believe that it is possible to access wisdom and insight from that level which represents the highest or ultimate reality.

Why are we talking about science, religion, and mysticism? Because a core belief here at Radio Alexandria is that if we as Team Humanity are going to get through what is likely to be a very challenging and difficult time in our future, we have to share a common core knowledge of these subjects even if we don't necessarily agree on all of them.

To help accomplish that goal I am going to suggest four books for all teams, both A and B, to have in their libraries. The A teams as you know are those who will survive in government built and supplied bunkers. The B teams are the rest of us who will have to get by as best we can with whatever resources we can cobble together. Three of these books we will discuss today. The fourth one we'll save for another time.

There are other good books on these subjects but if you could only have four these are the best in my opinion. You will note that even if a global catastrophe should befall us I am assuming that the major world religions will survive. Some may have more survivors than others and some of the great religious cities and shrines may be destroyed but I expect there will still be a goodly number of adherents and religion could be as divisive in the future as it is today.

I am further assuming that the stress between science and religion may well continue, and that mystics and the mystical path will still have some part in the human experience. So first we need one book that fairly and accurately summarizes the beliefs of each of the major faiths. The book that I recommend is *God is Not One* by Stephen Prothro.

Prothro's basic argument is that contrary to contemporary politically correct 'groupthink' the major religions do not all teach tolerance or extoll the same basic core beliefs. Instead, Prothro maintains each religion attempts to solve a different human problem. For Christianity the problem is sin and the solution is salvation. For Islam the problem is pride and the solution is submission. For Buddhism the problem is suffering and the solution is awakening. And for Confucianism the problem is chaos and the solution is social order.

Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School says *God is Not One* "could well be the most highly readable, accurate, and up-to-date introduction to the world's religions" while Rodney Stark, author of *Discovering God: the Origins of the Great Religions* calls Prothro's book "an urgently needed and very nicely done corrective to politically correct nonsense."

Of all the books on comparative religion I've come across in recent years Prothro's is the best. The full title is *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World and Why Their Differences Matter*.

Next on my list of books on religion, science, and mysticism is *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Religion and Politics* by Jonathan Haidt. Haidt's field is not theology but moral psychology. A member of the faculty of the Stern School of Business at New York University, Haidt contends that morality is the extraordinary human capacity that makes civilization possible. Yes, you heard the key phrase 'that makes civilization possible'. And that gives you some insight into why I consider this book essential to your library.

I also find it striking that a business school of all places would take morality so seriously

as to hire professors to teach it. Marx should be turning over in his grave. Maybe we as a society are making more progress than I thought.

Haidt has developed what he calls Moral Foundations Theory to try to understand why Americans especially are so divided over moral issues. This is a deep book full of insights and impossible to adequately summarize in a few paragraphs but central to understanding the divide between liberals and conservatives is the moral matrix.

The matrix contains six moral foundations: care/harm, liberty/oppression, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, and sanctity/degradation. Liberals are strong on just two of the six, care/harm and liberty/oppression and weak on the rest. Social conservatives are strong on all six foundations. Liberals are suspicious of appeals to sanctity, authority, and loyalty although they don't reject them in all cases. Libertarians as you might expect share characteristics of both liberals and conservatives.

Haidt began his study of the moral foundations of psychology as a political liberal but the more he studied the subject the more he began to understand why libertarians and conservatives hold the positions they do. In the process he came to better appreciate the values of both groups and why those values, at least some of them, are essential to a strong and healthy society.

So if you are a libertarian or a social conservative you will be pleasantly surprised to find that many of your beliefs are not only treated with respect but actually valued by a prominent university academic. That's not something you see very often and it takes some guts to stand up to the pressures of political correctness in today's academia.

Let me just add here that Haidt does not endorse any particular religion. He is simply trying to understand the nature of religious divisions in a society and what role religion and morality play in societal stability. In the larger scheme of things, if the day should come when we as Team Humanity do have to start over and build a new civilization, how we think about and deal with moral questions will be of central importance. Also of vital importance will be how much members of a religious group are able to interact with each other.

Haidt quotes research done by political scientists Robert Putnam and David Campbell which shows that what brings out the best in people is the friendships and group activities carried out within a moral matrix. Religious belongingness is what matters for neighborly behavior, not religious believing.¹

The Righteous Mind is original, deep and thought provoking. Hats off to Jonathan Haidt. Be sure to add his book to your library.

The third book on my list is also one of my favorites, *The Seven Mysteries of Life* by Guy Murchie. A grand synthesis of science, philosophy, and spirituality it is one of the most extraordinary books I have ever encountered. One reviewer said you could go to college for four years and not learn as much as you can from *The Seven Mysteries*. Published in 1978 it is still in print today and its insights are as valid today as they were three decades ago.

What are the seven mysteries? Merely listing them gives you some idea of the vast wisdom contained in this 690 page book.

The first is attraction, the intangibility behind material objects, the energy in the wave, the gene that makes the cell, the mind that controls the body.

The second mystery is interrelation, the consanguinity of all creatures and all creation, the common ancestry of all lines of inheritance, all kingdoms, all worlds.

The third mystery, omnipresence, means there is no boundary between life and non-life, that therefore all things are in essence alive, including rocks, glaciers, oceans, worlds, stars and

the universe. This by the way points to Murchie's most controversial theory but he is quick to point out that he is defining life far more broadly and inclusively than the commonly accepted dna-genetic-biochemical definition. Whether you end up agreeing or disagreeing with Murchie, its a stimulating way to think about what we really mean by the concept of 'life'.

The fourth mystery, polarity, recognizes the balance and mutuality of opposites such as light and darkness, male and female, predator and prey, matter and energy, good and evil. The fifth mystery, transcendence refers to the natural progression from our present, finite, mortal phase of life through space, time and self toward the infinite, immortal life beyond it.

The sixth mystery, germination, means the coming of age of a world such as Earth where knowledge and technology have for the first time reached a critical mass and are exploding into a new Reality. And lastly the seventh mystery is divinity. It is the greatest mystery of all and the unknowable essence that shapes and guides the universe, creating and maintaining all life, mind, and spirit everywhere and forever.

Guy Murchie's books have drawn praise from Buckminster Fuller, James Michener and Isaac Asimov to name a few. His earlier work, *Song of the Sky* won the John Burroughs medal from the American Museum of Natural History. Several reviewers on Amazon have said if you were stranded on a desert island and could have only one book, *The Seven Mysteries of Life* that would be that book. I agree.

Science, religion, and spirituality can be used to enhance or diminish our humanity. Let's work to make each of them a positive force in our collective human experience.

Let's take a brief break and when I come back I'll talk about the growing threats to global economic and political stability. I'm Roland B. Hunt and you're listening to The Next Chapter, a production of the North American Service of Radio Alexandria.

PSA: Shopping for a good shortwave radio

Many of you are listening to this program as a shortwave broadcast but others are listening to it as a podcast. If you're an internet listener I'd like to encourage you to invest in a portable shortwave receiver. Someday the worldwide web may not be available. Besides there are quite a few shortwave stations broadcasting to North America, many of them with programs you're not likely to hear on the domestic media.

There are a number of good portables on the market now, many with advanced circuitry only the military would have had just a few years ago. If you've listened much on the shortwave bands you know that it's not like tuning in a standard AM or FM station. Reception conditions can vary greatly even over the span of a few hours or days.

That's why advanced features like PLL, digital tuning, and double conversion are important. They help bring in weak signals and filter out stronger stations on adjacent channels. As you read customer reviews on the web and are trying to decide between models, be sure to select a radio that is highly rated for sensitivity to weak signals. When it comes to shortwave listening that's probably the single most important criterion.

If you want to listen to ham radio operators you'll need to spend a little more and get a receiver with SSB or single sideband capability. That's a special type of voice transmission pioneered by the hams and now also widely used by military organizations. Without an SSB switch on the radio, the conversations and reports of hundreds of thousands of ham operators around the world will be totally unintelligible.

Someday shortwave radio could be your only source of uncensored news and information. If a state of national emergency is ever declared, all domestic broadcast stations will be under the

control of the national government. If you want to hear anything other than the official version of what's going on you'll have to listen to shortwave radio and if you're serious about it you'll want to hear what ham radio operators around the world are reporting. Shortwave radio, in the past, in the present, and in the future, your window on the world. (end of psa)

The USA and indeed the world faces multiple dangers including most especially a global financial collapse, a deadly flu pandemic resulting from either a naturally occurring or a human engineered pathogen, and large scale terrorism using weapons of mass destruction.

Any of these could cause massive loss of life, a world wide descent into anarchy and violence, and martial law proclaimed in many nations, including the USA. I have been thinking about these issues for more than thirty years but at the end of the day, with so many unknown variables, I have concluded that it's impossible to predict in advance who is likely to survive and who is not. It is easy to say that people in remote rural areas stand a better chance than city dwellers but even that is not a certainty.

Joe might live in Philadelphia but he loses his job and decides to move to Montana to live with his sister on her ranch until the job market improves. Mike gets transferred by his company from the Boston office to a newly opened office in Colorado.

Marilyn and her family live in Miami until her husband suddenly dies of a heart attack and she decides to take her children and move in with her parents in the mountains of Tennessee. Soon after she arrives she meets Frank whose wife recently passed away from breast cancer. Marilyn's first husband had absolutely no interest in outdoor life and self reliance. Frank, besides being a kind and responsible person, is also a skilled and dedicated prepper.

So you see, situations change. Life is unpredictable. One day a family's chances of surviving a major national or global disaster are poor. The next day they are dramatically better, due to events no one could have predicted in advance.

What kind of world will we be living in following a global collapse? Perhaps initially it will be one of violence and anarchy. Then over a period of time order will be restored. Some form or forms of government will emerge. But what values will guide the elites who now will be in charge? Will it be a world of exploitation or one of kindness? This is where the technology of radio comes in.

Radio is a spreader of seeds. Those seeds are both ideas and *ideals*. Sometimes during a grave and dangerous time in history the only option is to spread seeds far and wide in the hope that in a remote hamlet here and a small village there those seeds, those ideas and ideals will survive to germinate into a new and wiser civilization.

Now I want to summarize the basic premise on which The Next Chapter rests. The Next Chapter can be seen as a book in Radio Alexandria's library. Based on the latest scientific data there is good reason to believe that intelligent life could be relatively common in the universe. By some estimates the number of planets in our galaxy alone that could support life as we know it numbers in the tens of billions. With numbers like that even if only 1 percent or even one one hundredth of 1% of those planets had intelligent life, the numbers would still total into the millions.

I should add that these estimates of the number of planets that could support intelligent life are not based on sheer speculation. For the first time we have hard data sent back by the Kepler space telescope and also data from some of our newest and largest terrestrial telescopes. If there are large numbers of planets out there with intelligent species then it is not unreasonable to assume that at least some of them must have progressed beyond our level of development with

all its dangers. So they must have solved the Hunt Paradox which states that the more advanced a species becomes the more likely it is to destroy itself.

The question then becomes how did they do it? I believe the key to solving this riddle lies within the nature of the paradox itself. Just as an intelligent species advances to the point it acquires the ability to build super weapons like nuclear bombs and artificially created deadly viruses, at the same time it is also likely to acquire the ability to alter and control its own genetic destiny.

Darwinian evolutionary programming for survival of the fittest makes sense when the goal is biological survival, that is, survival against the threats posed by other species. But when a species advances to the level where it can program its own destiny, replacing the autopilot of Darwinism, then all bets are off.

I believe that all intelligent species in the universe evolve this way. They may choose diverse paths once they attain control of their evolution, or possibly over a period of eons they eventually choose the same path, but it is a path that is self-directed, not one dictated by the needs of mere biological survival.

So it can be argued that we no longer need survival of the fittest and competition among species for scarce resources. Humans can already control their rate of reproduction. That's why the population of some countries is no longer growing. It is actually contracting as people consciously decide to have fewer babies and now they have the contraceptive technology to make it happen. That means the law of Thomas Malthus, that growth in population will always exceed the growth of the food supply, has been repealed. Humans, once we empowered ourselves with scientific knowledge, have consigned Malthus to a historical footnote.

If we can stop ourselves from overpopulating our planet and exhausting all its resources why cannot we overcome all the aggressive behavior programmed into us by survival of the fittest? What might have made evolutionary sense for apes and chimps makes no sense for a species that is truly advanced. If we can make anything we want using advanced technology, what would be the point of competition and war?

The time is rapidly approaching when we will be able to program all that Darwinian baggage out of our genome. But we need to clearly understand. When that happens we will no longer be operating from a primate genetic platform. We will no longer be Homo Sapiens, intelligent humans. We will be a new species, Novo Sapiens or New Intelligent Beings. Once we can fully control our genetic destiny, and we're almost there, we will indeed, for better or worse, be able to alter 'human nature'...permanently.

I believe that it is all but certain that what I have described above will someday come to pass, just as it has for other intelligent species who successfully solved the Hunt Paradox. The only question is whether it will happen in this civilization cycle or will it have to wait for a few centuries after humanity recovers from the global collapse which now appears ready to engulf us.

Either way there's no point in putting our heads in the sand like ostriches and hoping the issue will go away. Whether it's in the next few decades or the next few centuries once a species acquires the ability to control its genes that knowledge will be used. Will it be used for the benefit of all of humanity or just for a tiny elite? Right now the decision could go either way.

What can we say today with near certainty? That the big three, the US, China, and Russia, will play a crucial role in the creation of a new civilization and, yes, very probably the creation of a new species, what I call Novo Sapiens. This new form of human – or perhaps more accurately post human – will have a genius IQ and a very long life span, far beyond that of

humans today.

Even a collapse of civilization cannot stop this process. Too many people of great wealth, not to mention technically advanced nations, could put together teams of skilled scientists in remote and well hidden research centers to bring such a project to fruition. The question then becomes will these new post primates be able to work together to build a new global society with a global vision?

Such a process does not necessarily mean the end of the nation-state. In fact we may need nation-states as a counter balance to too much power concentrated in international organizations, just as the founders of the American federal system sought to balance power between the national and state governments.

But the key is to avoid new rivalries and new arms races and focus instead on the common goal of creating a new world civilization, one that is respectful of local values and traditions, but that also works to guide our planet toward a new renaissance of knowledge, responsibly used, for the benefit of all. In short we need to think of ourselves as a team, Team Humanity.

These are noble words but we must not deceive ourselves. This is a very tall order. I'm not sure it can be done. We have to admit the opposite is possible. The survivors of the old civilization could emerge from their bunkers and just continue building weapons of mass destruction.

If that happens sooner or later they'll create a doomsday machine worthy of the movie Dr. Strangelove, or the Dead Man's Hand, a kind of real life doomsday machine the the Soviets actually built during the 1970s. And then tragically the result could be life imitating art. We risk the very outcome foreseen in the motion picture: the surface of the Earth as dead as the Moon. [Deadroll music close, then under for ...]

My friends, if we can see such a future staring us in the face it's time to set a different course. This is not the age of Napoleon, or Alexander the Great, or Ghengis Khan. The age of conquest to satisfy some primitive primate, alpha male hunger for dominance is behind us.

Will humankind revert back to apes and monkeys or will we advance forward together in our united strength, toward Novo Sapiens, a species worthy of being accepted into a galaxy of truly advanced intelligent beings?

The helm is in our hands, Team Humanity. Let us set a course to sail not into the sunset but into the sunrise of a new and glorious future.(music up until end)

(anncr:) You've been listening to The Next Chapter with your host Roland B. Hunt. A transcript of this broadcast is available at our website radioalexandria dot net. Tune in again next week at this time for a new exploration into alternative futures on The Next Chapter, coming to you from Radio Alexandria.

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Definitions of commonly used terms on The Next Chapter:

The Hunt Paradox (sometimes referred to as the Strangelove Paradox) states that the more advanced an intelligent species becomes the more likely it is to destroy itself.

The Hunt Paradigm states that there are quite a few carbon based intelligent species in the universe. After reaching a certain level in their evolution they all go through a similar process of development until the point they encounter the Hunt Paradox. Some find a solution to the paradox and advance to a still higher level. Others do not and destroy themselves.

Note: It is not necessary that the conjecture be true. It is merely a useful mental construct for integrating ideas about evolution with ideas about the rise and fall of civilizations.

- i *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* by Robert Putnam and David Campbell. Simon and Shuster, 2010, p.473, quoted by Haidt, p. 267.