

Study Group+++++ Herald

FAMILY VALUES

Living
And Loving
On Urantia

Initial Thoughts

By Melissa Wells, Associate Editor

You may have already noticed many changes in this issue of *The Study Group Herald*. In the few years of its life, this newsletter has been lovingly nurtured by Marty Greenhut as managing editor. His watchcare has made this publication well respected in the Urantia movement.

Regrettably, Marty has made the choice to resign this responsibility in light of a good career opportunity. It was a tough decision for Marty and we can't thank him enough for his hard work to launch this publication. He performed wonders in making this an international voice of study groups of *The Urantia Book*.

Our new managing editor is Carol Hay, who is well known for her vocal talent and gift of oratory shared at conferences of the Fellowship. Carol resides in Boulder, Colorado and is active in many projects of the Rocky Mountain Society. To mention a few, she works with The Women's Corps, *The Invisible Fellowship* magazine, teenagers study groups and seminars introducing *The Urantia Book*.

You'll see Carol's handiwork in the next issue of the *Herald*, which will focus on how the Urantia movement celebrates the 2,000th year of the birth of Michael of Nebadon as the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Please send Carol pictures and stories of your group's activities.

With this issue, we take a look at family life values. Two topical studies focus on the complementarity of men and women, by Larry Watkins and Claudia Ayers, and the sensitive issue of abortion. Whether you're pro or con, more than likely you can find quotes from *The Urantia Book* to support your views. This is one thesis developed by a study group in Oregon.

Of interest to parents, we have interviewed some teens who talk frankly about the issues they are facing in the 90s.

Also in this issue, the Family Life ad hoc committee of the Fellowship is publishing a survey on family lifestyles. Please take a moment to complete this survey and return it to the Fellowship office. Your response will help this committee develop its strategy to support and assist readers of *The Urantia Book* in achieving optimal family life experiences.

Our presentation of the study groups in Arizona is timely since our next international conference -- IC'96 -- is going to be set in the highlands of Flagstaff, Arizona.

Let us know what you think of *The Study Group Herald*. Send us your likes, your dislikes, your happy stories or sad ones. And please send pictures.

The Fellowship publishes *The Study Group Herald* twice a year. Quotations are from *The Urantia Book* unless otherwise noted. All opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not represent policies of The Fellowship or editorial staff. Send written materials, artwork, classified advertisements, announcements, or donations to defray costs of publishing to *Study Group Herald*, The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614.

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In Memoriam

If you had known Mario Harrington, especially in connection with study of *The Urantia Book*, you'd be impressed with his scholar's touch. Along with that, or more likely even before it, you would have been moved by his warmth and love, the touch of his friendship. His was a gentle strength, enhanced by a wonderful sense of humor.

To study the big blue book with Mario was to engage a personality who took great joy in its message. It is no exaggeration to say that he would read and discuss the book with fellow readers with laughter and an intellect motivated by childlike faith in God. He was able to see humor as well as profound truth in the book's depiction of the grand universe or in some feature of our planetary history. He was completely respectful of truth yet relaxed in study.

Mario would add to our study his understanding of humanity and its diverse cultures, which he gained through years of working for the United Nations. He had witnessed human tragedy with clear eyes tempered with great faith.

He appreciated the monumentality of *The Urantia Book*. He often said that it was truly a privilege to be aware of the book and a special joy to be able to study it with others.

It was a rich experience to have known him and it will be glorious to renew our friendship in the Mansions on High.

On The Ties That Bind

Please consider sharing with us those family traditions and celebrations that bring meaning to your life and to the lives of your loved ones.

Did you celebrate the coming of your children's Thought Adjuster? Have you found a special way to give a child his first *Urantia Book*? Did you help your teenager plan a rite of passage? Do you renew your vows on occasion? Is there some special event that your family finds meaningful? How about a special prayer?

There are many of us who could use suggestions about creative ways to mark these special times in our lives.

Please help us by sharing your stories. Send your letters to *The Study Group Herald*, The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.



Who and How?

The Two Most-Asked Questions About *The Urantia Book*

By Meredith Sprunger
Fort Wayne, Indiana

When most people start reading *The Urantia Book*, they are interested in knowing whose Thought Adjuster was used in editing the Urantia Papers and the method used in their materialization. Dr. Sadler candidly discussed any issues, except a detailed answer to these two questions. He said the Contact Commission was asked to take a vow of secrecy regarding these two subjects.

When asked why these restrictions were imposed upon them, he gave the following reasons:

"The main reason for not revealing the identity of the contact personality is that the revelators do not want any human being -- any human name -- to be associated with *The Urantia Book*. They want this revelation to stand on its own declarations and teachings. They are determined that future generations shall have the book wholly free of all mortal connections. They do not want a St. Peter, St. Paul, Luther, Calvin or Wesley associated with the book. The book doesn't even bear the name or any mark of the printer who brought the book into being."

And secondly: "There is much about the appearance of the Urantia Papers which no human being fully understands. No one really knows just how this phenomenon was executed. There are numerous missing links in the story of how the revelation came to appear in written English. If anyone should tell all he really knows about this technique and the methods employed in getting this revelation, such a narrative would satisfy no one, for there are too many missing links."

During Dr. Sadler's investigation of this phenomenon, he consulted men like Howard Thurston, the renowned sleight-of-hand artist who devoted considerable time to exposing fraudulent mediums and psychics. He also conferred with Sir Hubert Wilkens, the noted scientist and explorer involved in investigating psychic phenomena. They agreed that the phenomena connected with this individual could not be classified with other types of psychic phenomena, such as automatic writing, telepathy, clairvoyance, trances, channeling, or split personality.

There have been various guesses as to who the contact personality may have been, but nothing can be verified. On numerous occasions, Dr. Sadler told me that he didn't know how the materialization was accomplished. Almost everything known about the origin of *The Urantia Book*, he assured me, is found within the book.

Dr. Sadler engaged handwriting experts to determine the origin of these papers. The experts assured him that it was not the handwriting of the contact personality or those associated with this person.

While these questions are interesting to discuss, they have nothing to do with the validity of *The Urantia Book*, which must be determined by the content of the book itself.

I am interested in establishing contacts with other readers, and I was wondering if there is any way to get the addresses of readers around the world. It would be nice if *The Herald* could link people for personal and intellectual interaction. This would strengthen and catalyze the growth of this spiritual fellowship.

Ed Roache
Watertown, New York

Editor's Note: The 1994-1995 edition of the Study Group Directory is now available from the offices of the Fellowship at 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614, (312) 327-0424. This publication lists the many study groups throughout the world.

It is a marvel to imagine the combined efforts of those who worked on our December international visit-at-home, with its accent on the young people who are seldom center-staged in serious get-togethers.

All of the articles were a delight and comfort, making the August 1993 edition of aging on Urantia well-timed. This issue is well worth re-reading.

If only I could write things clearly and well and there wasn't the necessity of cleaning a house too big for two people ... just after the wood stove has been closed for the season (so cozy, but oh so grime-engendering).

It would be a nice alternative to express the senior glory of enjoying the ability to really understand the past 77 years ... reasons behind motives ... with compassion unavailable up to this time of maturity and when peers in their 80s and 90s hint that's only a beginning. How can one help but be left on a rough seat of discomfort sitting on the fence of reality, whether 'tis better to welcome transition as soon as possible or to value with wisdom every Urantia moment?

Ruth Spaulding
Northfield, Massachusetts

I understand that there are some who feel that the language of *The Urantia Book* is sexist. I can't imagine improving the beautiful way the book is written. The words are very carefully chosen.

Language, of course, is continually changing. The language at the time of the writing of *The Urantia Book* is different from the idiom of the present day.

An example is the word "man." Its primary definition, until recently, was "an adult human being." A current dictionary gives as the primary meaning "an adult male human being." My dictionary even gives a footnote on why this change has come to be. Some people feel that the old way was derogatory, suggested predominance and there was too much room for confusion.

Perhaps this change in our language is just a temporary trend, which would be just fine with me. Not all of us feel that it is sexist to refer to humans as "men." Not all of us feel that it can't be understood. To me it just flows better to say man rather than man/woman. All of those slashes -- he/she, men/women, brothers/sisters -- are constantly reminding us of gender. I think less emphasis would be better. In any case, I and most English-speaking people are going along with the changes in our language, especially since some of the changes have been made officially.

The problem goes beyond language. Some people have much anger about the changes which are still needed. Remember, both men and women are making great strides in this regard and anger can't help the situation.

Whatever turns our language takes, *The Urantia Book* is not sexist. It is written in the language of the time, just as Jesus spoke on earth in the language of his time. Perhaps it sounds better in another language, but to me it sounds true, good and beautiful that God is our Father and all men are brothers.

Karen Anderson
Milford, Connecticut

Thank you (Mark Kulieke) for taking the time to compile all the facts and for sorting your memory in writing *Birth of a Revelation*. There are those of us in the general population who have a high level of curiosity about the mysteries of life and the details of which you speak in your booklet. It is thrilling to go back in time through your words and glimpse the early days.

It was also thrilling to read about your Childhood Days at the Forum in the August '93 issue of *The Herald*. The Pine Lodge at Beverly Shores sounds like a magical place, with the Forum members there and, I'm sure, many unseen friends in attendance.

You did mention your feeling odd and different at those gatherings and that you felt you were among a special group of people and blessed to be part of this fledgling project. Mark, I often still feel that way at Urantia gatherings. It may not be original or unique, but the feeling is similar and I'm convinced many of us are blessed with this feeling.

George Thornbury
Pikeville, Kentucky

I am now living in Starkville, Mississippi and need to know about study groups in this area.

Thank you and keep up the important work of putting out this magazine. It takes the place of David Zebedee's Messenger Corps.

Jack London
Starkville, Mississippi

In the August 1993 issue I especially liked Mark Kulieke's article on his childhood days at the Forum. Also, the piece by Jean Ramsay was good. Thanks for the great piece on Florida readers.

Gordon Stahl
Venice, Florida

I'm interested in corresponding with *Urantia Book* readers who are interested in discussing Paper 49, The Inhabited Worlds, with particular emphasis on part 3, Worlds of the Non-Breathers.

We are told that there are three inhabitable worlds in our solar system and that a planet of the non-breather order exists in "close proximity" to Urantia. We are also told on page 330 that the revelators withhold information in order to provide a "stimulus to creative speculation."

I am interested in speculating creatively on the subject of the other two inhabitable worlds of our local system using all available scientific and astronomical information.

It's been my experience that very few readers are at all interested in this paper. I contend, however, that if it weren't important, the Revelators wouldn't have included it.

Is anybody out there as fascinated by this paper as I am? I'd like to hear from you. Please write.

Tom Maringer
2692 South Powerll Street
Springdale, AK 72764

Bulletin Board

The **FLOWERS Program** of The Fellowship will lend a hand to groups of readers of *The Urantia Book* who would like to engage in outreach programs. If interested, write the Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

The **International Study Group Directory** lists names and locations of study groups in your area. They also include information on Area Coordinators of the Fellowship, persons who are happy to assist you in every way possible to locate other readers of *The Urantia Book* or form your own study group. For the current issue, contact The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 or call (312) 327-0424.

The **International Fellowship Committee** needs more *Urantia Books* to send to readers in Russia and other regions. Contact John Lange at the Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

The **Women's Service Corps of Boulder-Denver** has information for starting a corps of your own. This group has been in existence for four years and can provide the needed essentials to help you begin. Write Shelly Anderson, 2120 Edgewood Dr., Boulder, CO 80304 or call (303) 443-9806.

Do you have copies of **sermons or inspirational messages** by spiritual persons in your community (such as preachers, rabbis, priests, monks, nuns, chaplains, 12-step sponsors) which you would like to share with us? Please send printed materials or DOS-formatted disks to the Publications Committee, The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

The Fellowship needs any good photography and high-quality poetry for *The Journal*. The editors are also interested in fiction or other creative prose. Contact or write The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.



Artwork courtesy of Steve Sawyer, Versailles, Kentucky.

Tape 1: *Opening* by Meredith Sprunger, Harry McMullan and Steve Dreier; *The Science of Serendipity* by Carol Hay.

Tape 2: *The Big Bang Didn't Happen* by Michael Wisenbaker; *Two Cosmologies: Astronomy's and The Urantia Book's* by Irwin Ginsburgh, Ph.D.

Tape 3: *Time and Space* by Dan Massey; *The Value of Medicine* by John Lange, M.D.

Tape 4: *The Kingdom of God and The Cosmology of The Urantia of Book* by Phillip Calabrese, Ph.D.; *Sources of The Urantia Book's Historical Geology* by Matthew Klein.

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Tape 5: *A Journey to the Edge of the Universe* by Eric Carlson, Ph.D.; *Will: The Key to Supreme Universe Integration* by David Elders.

Tape 6: *Science, Self and The Supreme* by Lawrence Schkade, Ph.D.; *Music Program*.

Tape 7: *Celebration of Jesus' 2,000th Birthday*

Tape 8: *Life on the Edge of Forever* by Dan Young; *Celebration of Jesus' 2,000th Birthday; Closing*.

International Letters

Dear Readers,

I've been back in Zambia from the United States of America for nearly 10 years. Before I left, I enjoyed the fellowship of many *Urantia Book* readers. Since my return, I've tried to share the book with people and I've placed one book in my local library in hopes of gaining fellow readers.

Though I still have not managed a study group, I have three books which I use as loan copies to those who are interested. The major problem that I face is to supply books to those who are serious readers and wish to have their own books. I've written to the International Fellowship Committee to assist me with this issue.

Peace is elusive in the world today and people need the good news -- the gospel of Jesus -- to set them free. We need to know the special life circumstances that your countries are facing or what you as individuals are going through.

It has become more difficult to get responses from readers around the world and I want to take this opportunity to appeal to all those who may read this letter to please write to me. We would love to hear from you and to know what you are doing to promote the Gospel of Jesus. We would love to share your joys and sorrows. Let us keep in touch and encourage one another in the building of this kingdom.

Zambia today is enjoying the freedom brought about by the new Third Republic, claiming to bring democracy back to the people. To those of us who have read *The Urantia Book*, this falls short of Jesus' ideal government, which is more, much more. We have Christians in the government, but you and I may debate over the term for ages. We need to know who is a true Christian in light of the gospel of Jesus.

I have faith in the work of the ministering spirits of the Infinite Spirit, and I know that when all is said and done, "all things work for good to those who love the Lord" (Romans 8:28). But the process of going through this life is still very challenging for those who truly love God. There is so much to be done. The harvest is plenty, yet the laborers so few.

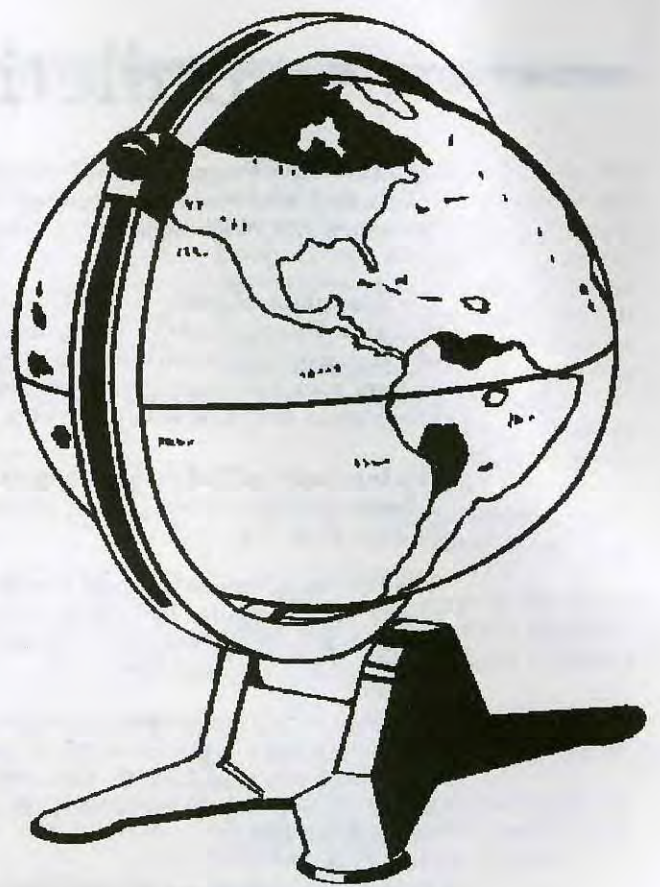
I hope some day Zambia will host a group of *Urantia Book* readers from other countries. You know how you wish you could see it in your lifetime. But what does it matter, as long as it happens. One must just do the best today and leave the consequences of tomorrow to the Infinite Father.

*Chilufya Thompson
International Editor
Study Group Herald*

Dear Chilufya,

Many thanks for your letter. It is gratifying to know that someone somewhere is thinking lovingly of you without being aware of such waves of thought. That was the kind of gratitude I felt at the time I received your letter.

Our study group, the Living Flame Fraternity, is alive and active. We are holding our Saturday meetings regularly. During IC'93, two of our members decided to attend. One of them, however, lost his wife only 10 days after giving birth



to a baby boy. This sad event caused both of them to cancel the trip. We were hoping to get firsthand information and pictures from the Conference Centre, but that sad event deprived our group of the expected joy of receiving this news from the Centre in Canada. God willing, I will attend the next conference in 1996.

An unfortunate aspect of our study group is that it is not growing in number. We have maintained an average number of between eight and 10 for five years. The highest we have hit during this period was 12. I wonder whether we're lacking something very essential. I admit that we have been talking to few individuals known to us. It is surprising why people can't make time to serve God. The only excuse by those we've contacted is that they had other engagements which coincide with our meeting time. From our point of view, we don't see any justification for this kind of excuse because if they wanted to come, they could make alternative arrangements. I don't know if you have any suggestions for us.

*Oblempon-Nikoi
P.O. Box 3361
Accra, Ghana*

Dear Chilufya,

I recently received a copy of *The Study Group Herald* and was so happy and surprised my brothers and sisters in the homeland of my ancestors are getting the spirit fed by *The Urantia Book*. I thank God.

I'm 32 and have read *The Urantia Book* for six years now. You are a beautiful sister, a queen. Tell me about yourself and if you have a study group in Zambia. How many people? I pray for the seeds of truth to grow in your community and country.

*Michelle Cummings
Garden Grove, California*

Dear Chilufya,

We read with interest your International Readers section of *The Study Group Herald*. We are particularly interested in the Urantia Nazareth Brotherhood in Accra, Ghana, for it was in Ghana, more than 20 years ago that we received *The Urantia Book*. Since we began our reading and study of *The Urantia Book* in the Ghanaian environment, we feel a special kinship to Ghanaians who are likewise truth seekers who have found *The Urantia Book*.

A number of years ago, we had an extraordinary discussion with a woman from Zambia who was at the Summer Seminar at Lake Forest, Illinois, USA. She was a tremendous help in explaining the section on the races. It was a discussion that really made a difference to us. Do you know to whom I am referring? We would like to have the opportunity to tell her what a difference she has made in our understanding of that section.

Ralph and Betty Zehr
Waverly, New York USA

Dear Readers,

I was very excited to read of the learning materials for children provided in *The Study Group Herald*. This is a much-needed service, for it is the young people of today who will pass on their understanding for tomorrow and so spread their own truth to the world. One person can make a difference in spreading the teachings.

Sharen Clampitt
Unit 1, 81 Seabrook Ave.
New Lynn
Auckland 7 New Zealand

Dear Readers,

The caravans were packed last May and again the J.J. Johnson tribe headed for the Middle East. We arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on a 747 and were greeted by Jeff Bedell. The "Riyadh Readers" were formed and a familiar group we are, having originally met in Jeddah in 1980.

Our jobs have brought us back to this desert. Jeff, hired by Vinnell Corp., teaches English as a foreign language to men in the Saudi National Guard. J.J. is the Hughes Aircraft liaison to the Royal Saudi Air Force and Geri is a private therapist to an autistic child in Saudi.

Sons Michael and David are in ninth and sixth grade, respectively, at the International school, which is an American-curriculum school attended by at least 25 different nationalities. The boys' classes are well mixed with Europeans, Australians, Asians, Middle Easterners, Saudis, Christians and Moslems.

Despite our earlier experiences here, we all had to adjust to the culture again. There is much that is different to our liberal American ways. Michael and David must wear long trousers in all public places, be careful of designs on tee shirts and keep their hair relatively short. Geri is expected to wear the abaya (black cloak) and a head scarf. Women never look men directly in the eyes, and our boys may not show much curiosity about the young girls here. Women don't drive and optimally should be escorted in public by a male member of the family. Restaurants are divided into "Men Only" and "Family" sections. In the family area, provisions are made to screen off each table or booth for privacy. There are no movie theaters, but we can buy videotapes with all romantic scenes edited out.

There is a mosque in every neighborhood, but no other religious structure or practice is legal. Proselytizing any religion other than Islam is a serious offense, though one may worship God quietly at home.

God is included in every aspect of life. Each airport, mall, bank, school, office building, hospital and supermarket sets aside a place for prayer. All business STOPS five times a day to honor Allah. The local television stations not only announce prayer times, but broadcast the prayers from the Grand Mosque in Mecca.

In the words of a deeply spiritual Moslem friend, prayer call is the invitation to visit with Allah, to feel His love and peace. In that light, even the dawn call that pierces the early morning quiet and our deep sleep, is greeted with a smile, for the Muezzin calls out, "Come to Allah, come to Allah, prayer is better than sleep."

J.J., Geri, Michael & David Johnson
Hughes Aircraft, Unit 61313
APO AE 09803-1313

Jeff Bedell
Unit 61322, Box 1635-A
APO AE 09803-1322

Dear Fellowship,

Enclosed is my cheque for \$20 USF because I appreciate receiving the publication. Like so many others who write to you, I feel isolated and disappointed by the lack of interest in truth by the people around me. *The Study Group Herald* is my only link to other readers of *The Urantia Book* and hope for a better world.

Sharon Sadler
Fruitvale, B.C., Canada

Dear Readers,

Until very recently there were very few readers of *The Urantia Book* in Puerto Rico. This seems to be changing rapidly. Shortly after *The Urantia Book* became available in Spanish late last summer, two important bookstores in San Juan began to carry it and many have been sold.

In the past few weeks, I have met several new readers of *The Urantia Book*, and some of them will add new blood to our study group. There is also a possibility that other groups will be formed within the next year. That's how important it is to have a Spanish translation available to us.

I discovered *The Urantia Book* in 1976 when I was a student at Tulane University in New Orleans. Soon after that I became a member of the study group in New Orleans. Later I moved to south Florida and participated in the study groups in West Palm Beach and North Miami Beach. In 1981 I moved to Puerto Rico and have been somewhat isolated from the Urantia movement on the continent.

I want to end this note sharing with you the way we pray the Lord's prayer. If you don't understand the words, you will certainly understand their power.

"Padre Nuestro, que estas en el cielo, santificado sea tu Nombre, venga a nos Tu reino, hagase tu voluntad asi en la tierra como en el cielo. El pan nuestro de cada dia, danoslo hoy. Perdona nuestras deudas asi como nosotros perdonamos a nuestros deudores. No nos dejes caer en tentacion, mas libranos del mal, porque Tuyo es el poder, el reino y la gloria por los siglos de los siglos. Amen."

Raul Pujol



The Melchizedek Bestowal

As Reported in The Bible and *The Urantia Book*

By Wayne and Ute Ferrier, Williamsport, Pennsylvania

About 2,000 years before the birth of Christ, Machiventa Melchizedek lived on earth for more than 90 years. He left a profound legacy, and evidence of Melchizedek's teachings can be traced through history and found in many strange alcoves around the world. The most significant records, though, are found in the Bible and *The Urantia Book*.

The Urantia Book gives the perspective from the local universe administration's point of view. After the rebellion of the Planetary Prince and the default of Adam and Eve, the Melchizedek receivers administered progress of the planet. They knew Michael of Nebadon's plans to incarnate on this world, but they didn't know when. Machiventa Melchizedek volunteered to live on earth in human form to keep alive truth and prepare the way for Michael, our Creator Father.

Known on earth simply as Melchizedek, Machiventa fostered a unique heritage. He started the Hebrews on a course toward monotheism, taught about Deity as a personal God who can be known by faith and founded the Salem schools from where missionaries went forth to teach. The office of priesthood followed him, prophets came after him and finally Michael arrived as the baby Jesus.

Melchizedek is not mentioned extensively in the Bible, yet all accounts involving him are exceptional, even for scholars who lack information provided by *The Urantia Book*. From Salem, which later became the holy city of Jerusalem, he taught about El Elyon, the Most High God. Abraham, Melchizedek's most promising student, adopted El Elyon as his God and spread the news among his people. Thus, Melchizedek's efforts fostered monotheism, belief in

one God, which was nurtured until Jesus arrived 2,000 years later.

Only if one God reigned supreme might the coming of His Son have significance. Otherwise, he would be one of many. Melchizedek's goal was to prepare men for the day when the Son of God would walk on earth.

The most elaborate biblical account of Melchizedek is found in Genesis, chapters 14 to 17, where Machiventa Melchizedek's relationship with Abraham is depicted. Melchizedek towers over all other personalities found in Genesis. He had both royal and priestly authority in the city that later became Israel's holy capital. And Abraham submitted himself to Melchizedek, and him only.

Biblical scholars have been intrigued by the fact that Melchizedek was a Canaanite and Abraham an Israelite. Yet Abraham accepted the authority of a Canaanite priest-king. In this there is no parallel in biblical literature.

Genesis describes a meeting between Abraham and the priest-king Melchizedek. Abraham had just returned from a victorious battle and attributed his success to Melchizedek, to whom he gave 10 percent of his booty. Melchizedek in turn gave Abraham bread and wine. While the biblical story makes it look like Melchizedek blessed Abraham's battle, the *Urantia Papers* state that Melchizedek tried to persuade Abraham to give up his crusade of conquest.

"Melchizedek explained to Abraham the futility of contending with the Amorite confederation but made it equally clear that these backwards clans were certainly committing suicide by their foolish practices so that in a few generations they would be so weakened

that the descendants of Abraham, meanwhile greatly increased, could easily overcome them." (*Urantia Book*, pg. 1020)

Melchizedek did not fear Abraham's enemies and would not defend against them but allowed Abraham to do so, while still encouraging him to abandon warfare altogether. Melchizedek tolerated slow change while constantly advising better alternatives. Later in life, Abraham yielded to Melchizedek's wisdom and gave up warfare.

Abraham financed the Melchizedek schools in Salem. Not only did Abraham set a precedent when he paid tithes to Melchizedek; he likewise required all his allies to do the same. Thus he provided for tents and food. From this learning center in Salem, students spread the Melchizedek teachings far and wide in the ancient world.

In his book, *The Religion of Ancient Israel*, Th. C. Vriezen treats the encounter between Abraham and Melchizedek, as told in the Bible, as evidence that Israel incorporated part of its religion and ideology from its neighbors. Israelites were not isolated from the peoples living around them. Rather they adopted much of their neighbors' legal systems, social structures and even religions.

Genesis, in particular, has many parallels to the Babylonian creation story. The fact that Abraham was receiving instructions and giving tithes in honor of El Elyon of Melchizedek indicates that Israel not always viewed itself as supreme. The concept of Israelites as the chosen people did not occur until later in history. And it was during these times of reconstruction that many texts were destroyed or altered so that they would more easily evoke national senti-

ments and loyalty in the Israelites. Many texts concerning Melchizedek were lost and the one preserved centered around Melchizedek's supposed blessing of Abraham's warfare.

In the years following Abraham, the Israelites' religion far surpassed that of neighboring peoples because of their advanced concept of deity. Not only did the Israelites evolve to worship one God in the place of many, they also believed that a personal relationship between God and his people existed. This concept of contactable deity was new but remained as a unique characteristic of the Hebrew religion.

This superior relationship with God took centuries to evolve. The leap from many gods to one God did not come suddenly. But, as biblical scholars explain, El Elyon of Melchizedek had the qualities to survive the transitions. He was the Supreme God of the Canaanite people. He was also a personal god, family god and certainly still a tribal god.

According to biblical scholars, the Israelites worshipped both El Elyon and their traditional god, Yahweh, for some time. Eventually God was simply referred to as Yahweh, who encompassed many of El Elyon's characteristics. Th. C. Vriezen describes in *The Religion of Ancient Israel* how Israel had been exposed to the so-called wisdom literature and came to believe in a common human heritage and universal thought.

Yahweh was at last seen as the Lord of all mankind, as God from the beginning, even before Israel. Additionally, the entire universe, not just the earth, was depending on Yahweh, since He not only created the earth but the universe as well. He became the God of wisdom and providence. Indeed, the concept of God had come far since the days of sacrifice.

In Abraham's time it had been commonplace to sacrifice animals and even firstborn sons. People sought to appease their gods with these offerings, who in turn would protect them. Melchizedek tried to persuade Abraham that God does not require sacrifice. He told Abraham that through faith alone can people win favor with God.

Melchizedek knew how difficult it would be for Abraham to abandon sacrifice altogether. So he introduced bread and wine as a substitute for blood and carnage. This act was later seen as a precursor of the Eucharist and, hence,

Melchizedek's name entered into the canon of the Roman mass.

Another interesting fact about Melchizedek is that he instituted the office of priesthood. Gonzalo Baez-Camargo mentions this point in his book *Archaeological Commentary on the Bible*. The Qumran documents discovered in caves during the 1940s are biblical supplements. Many of the writings are not included in the Bible and offer information not available any place else. According to some of the Qumran manuscripts found in cave 11 (11QMelch), Melchizedek is viewed as the prototype of the priesthood, since the priestly office has since been called "the heritage of Melchizedek."



A priest differs from a prophet. Priesthood is an official religious institution that mediates between sacred and profane aspects of human societies. Priests are ritual experts who have learned skills and secret knowledge as spiritual leaders of their society. In Jerusalem only the high priests were allowed in the inner chambers of the temple. Since Melchizedek was founder and priest of Jerusalem, it seems natural that the priestly office is attributed to him.

The priesthood, as we understand it, may not be the only designation that originated with Melchizedek. A host of prophets, found in historical documents, came after Melchizedek as well.

In Israel the teachings were kept alive in two ways. The priesthood institutionally upheld the covenant, which was a legal treaty relationship with God, and passed on information from generation to generation. Periodically, the prophets would appear on the scene to interpret the current divine will.

Peake Fleure wrote in *The Law and*

the Prophets, "The rise of the prophets is the great feature of the life of Israel, and the high artistic quality and power of thought and diction among them is an indication of what the human mind was becoming able to do ... [T]he later prophets are literally giants, leading the thought of their people from the narrow limits of the old covenant and ritual to the idea of a universal God, whom some of them as yet barely comprehended, and who must be served less through ritual than through righteousness of life."

Biblical records also hold Melchizedek to be the precursor to Jesus, as stated in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Melchizedek was not only known as the priest of Salem; his name also means in ancient Hebrew "My King is Sedek (the God)" or My King is Righteousness." Salem has been translated as "peace."

Melchizedek foreshadows Jesus as the king of righteousness and prince of peace. Melchizedek also foretold the coming of Christ; hence, Jesus is described in the New Testament (Hebrew 7:17) as being "forever after the order of Melchizedek."

The most significant successes of Melchizedek's bestowal are that he revived monotheism and that he changed the perception of God into a merciful, personal God, a God who only requires faith.

Abraham's covenant with Yahweh is the centerpiece of the message in Genesis. Yahweh appears as the patriarch's partner. God is accessible, according to Melchizedek, but grander than that, God only requires faith for his relationship to work. God promises to uphold everything. Man only needs faith and desire to do the Father's will.

"This covenant of Melchizedek with Abraham represents the great Urantian agreement between divinity and humanity, whereby God agrees to do everything; man only agrees to believe God's promises and follow his instructions." (*Urantia Book*, pg. 1020)

Abraham took the covenant even more seriously after the birth of his son Isaac and went to Salem to have the covenant put in writing. It was at this formal and public acceptance that he changed his name from Abram to Abraham. (*Urantia Book*, pg. 1021, and Genesis 17)

Jesus built upon the heritage of Melchizedek's teachings when he instructed his apostles on the third preaching tour: "Salvation is the gift of the Father and is revealed by his Sons. Accept-

Continued on page 30

Regarding Instructions or Mandates

By Mark Kulieke, Green Bay, Wisconsin

The superhuman sponsors of *The Urantia Book* wrote much material that doesn't appear in the book. They also had substantial dialogue with the Contact Commission which was recorded, but also doesn't appear in the book. There seems to be some confusion about this material and its importance.

This extra material falls into three categories:

Category One: Papers or fragments of papers which were given to the Forum but subsequently recalled. By this I mean material that was originally intended to be part of *The Urantia Book*. Such recalled material was gone as quickly as it came through the years, approximately from 1924 to 1942. It was destroyed by the revelators themselves or by members of the Contact Commission.

Much of it seems to have been regarded as material that was too difficult for us to comprehend. For example, the purpose of each of the seven superuniverses was originally revealed. Now we have only the purpose of Orvonton, our own superuniverse.

Perhaps some of the material was recalled because of reactions among members of the Forum that the superhuman revelators regarded as not altogether fortunate. They used the Forum for dialogue and as a test group, and edited the papers according to the Forum's questions and reactions.

This editing was an ongoing process of nearly 20 years. Some Forum members have dim recollections about some of this recalled material. On the whole, they seem to remember very little or are disinclined to talk about it. It doesn't seem that we are meant to know about these matters.

Category Two: Informal exchanges (chitchat) between superhuman revelators and members of the Contact Commission. Most of this communication was personal in nature and so informal that it was not recorded. What was recorded is long since gone and was very limited in time.

A few memories persist among the Urantia readers and students, usually

short anecdotes. For example, when the Contact Commission was told that the revelators started working on the Urantia project during the Middle Ages, Lena Sadler asked, "What took you so long?" There was a long pause before a Midwayer answered, "Oh, we see what you mean." While it may not matter whether some of these anecdotes are known, they are probably of minimal significance.



Category Three: More formal presentations which were intended for repeated readings, study and action plans by the Contact Commission and Forum. Some people regularly refer to this extra material as "instructions" and certainly some of it was in the nature of instructions. Others use the word "mandates" to refer to this material. I'm not aware that any surviving fragments constitute mandates.

Some material, now gone, may have been mandates to the Forum, Contact Commission and the Urantia Foundation because all groups entered into formal agreements and commitments with the superhuman revelators. The Forum and the Contact Commission have long since fulfilled their roles and accomplished their missions. The Foundation was the formal heir to the Contact Commission and is presumably bound by its commitments to our celestial overseers.

To my knowledge no one is being

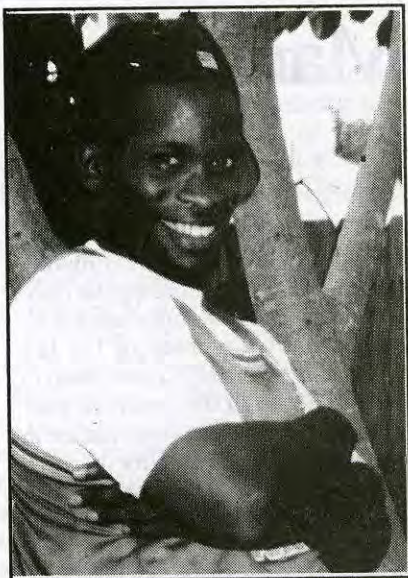
currently "mandated" by any surviving writings. The Contact Commission members received no more regular communications from the superhumans after 1952 until the death of the last member of the Contact Commission in 1982. I understand there was one brief intervention of an emergency nature in 1980, the details and validity of which are disputed. Short of that, the instructions from superhumans appear to be past history.

The only writing that exists in fragmentary form is the third category: Writings outside of *The Urantia Book* which, in a general sense, constitute instruction or "guidance." It is general guidance which can inspire us in our work and give us a general direction. It is not very detailed.

For example, I regard the following statement of superhuman origin as general encouragement and guidance:

"You must learn to possess your souls in patience. You are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Overrapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its worldwide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the people of many languages when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

This material didn't belong in the book. The major portion of it dealt with how to bring the book into existence, how to handle the book, how to get it published, and after publication, how to form and deal with groups connected with the book. Most of it was time bound, hence its destruction at different points in the the last 40 years or so. I know of at least three or four points when this superhuman guidance was destroyed, the last being 1982 when the final member of the Contact Commission died. Only a few frequently quoted fragments have survived.



For Teens, It's A Different World

By Barry D. Bradley, Largo, Florida

Editor's Note: This article is a candid conversation with a group of teenagers who have grown up in middle-class America. Their common bond is growing up in a single-parent household. Life's responsibilities have been thrust on them early. They are shy about spirituality. Two of the teens have grown up with The Urantia Book, having spent many an evening listening to adults study the text in their living room. As these two teens experience the consequences of their choices, their interest in God and their relationship to their Creator begins to show. But it is private, something only occasionally shared with their mother. With their friends, they are too cool to show any such feelings. One friend told them that God doesn't love felons, and when they related this to their mother, they listened intently as she read from The Urantia Book the words of hope and comfort which Jesus spoke to the thief on the cross. We're including these private thoughts of teens in this issue of The Herald to show what parents and teens are confronted with in the 90s. It's an awesome task guiding a child safely into adulthood and conscious choice to cooperate with the Thought Adjuster. Perhaps by listening we may be able to find a way to better share our own hard-earned knowledge with our teens.

The teenager shifts uneasily as he answers some difficult questions about life, sex, drugs and the pressures of growing up in the 90s. He doesn't want to be here in the seat next to me, and he doesn't want to answer my intrusive questions.

There's an underlying mistrust of grown-ups and our intentions. Only when you gain his trust will he speak candidly.

Sure, we baby boomers had some sex, drugs and booze as teenagers, but we weren't surrounded by it. Nor did we carry guns to school.

Things are different now.

We shocked our parents by wearing long hair, funny clothes and listening to music that didn't make any sense, and in some cases it still doesn't (like *Woolly Bully* or *Louie-Louie*).

But is today's teenage environment that much different? Sure, the boys wear earrings and the girls wear tattoos, but can they really do anything we didn't do in the 50s, 60s or 70s?

Our generation invented drugs, for crying out loud. We invented today's music, along with the prevailing disrespect and mistrust for all adults.

We also invented our teens, intri-

cate puzzles of conflicting emotions, on-and-off again communications, and threats of unfulfilled potential. How did we emerge safely from that paradox of growth? And how can we help our teens safely grow through this vulnerable stage?

In an effort to get their point of view about grown-ups and growing up, we interviewed five teens. Some of the answers will be ordinary. Others will be shocking.

Perhaps surprisingly, they are concerned about universal issues like politics, overpopulation, AIDS and the national debt. They are concerned about grades, parties and peer pressure. And, sadly, they are worried about getting shot at school.

The five teenagers are unremarkable as a group. You can see them on any corner, hanging around. Individually, however, they display an intellect that belies their years.

Becky is a pretty 14-year-old with a sharp mind and a "Valley Girl" attitude. Any question or statement is likely to be followed by "Huh," which is teenage shorthand for "I'm not paying attention to you." She can be as feminine and charming as a kitten.

She can also beat up most of the boys in the neighborhood.

Grayson, 16, is quiet, reserved and intellectual. He is the unofficial leader of the group, and he has natural leadership potential. But at his awkward age, more time is spent in front of the TV than on any intellectual pursuits.

Cory -- or Coco to her best friends -- is 15. She has a particular maturity, perhaps because she has a younger brother that she has had to oversee in her single-parent household.

Melvin is 20 and black and smart. His rough-and-tumble upbringing has given him a sharp edge and a quick mind. He's always ready to help, and deals with others in a straightforward, no-nonsense manner.

J.D. is 18. He comes from a mixed race family. He found himself -- and his identity -- with one of the local gangs. That's behind him now, but he still bears the tattoo and the mentality of his gang days. Nevertheless, he is smart, and will succeed because of his fist-in-your-face attitude. Like the others, he doesn't look for trouble, but when it comes, he won't back down.

What follows is an edited transcript of those individual interviews.

STUDY GROUP HERALD: Do you think it's harder for teenagers to grow up in the 90s than it was for previous generations?

BECKY: Yes. There are new problems to deal with. There's all this debt and everybody worries about everything. And the adults feel the pressure and sometimes they take it out on us.

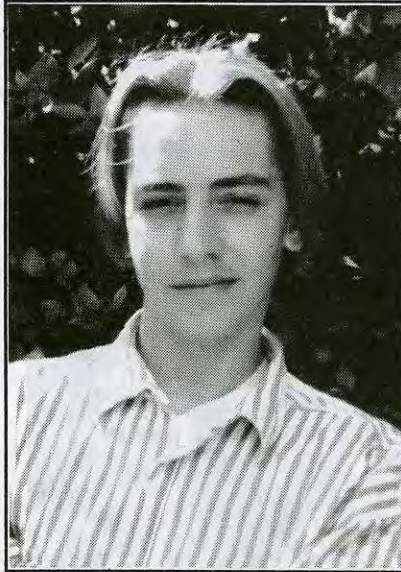
CORY: I feel that it's harder now because teenagers are having to grow up faster. And they're facing more problems now.

GRAYSON: I can say it's definitely harder now. People don't expect much from teenagers. The grown-ups don't think we're going to amount to anything. We don't get much support except from our friends.

J.D.: I think it's harder now. There's a lot of peer pressure to fit in, and teenagers worry about more things than grown-ups realize.

MELVIN: Things are harder now because of gangs. And because I'm older, everybody comes to me for guidance. But who do I go to?

HERALD: Are gangs a problem for you?



MELVIN: The police think I'm in a gang because I used to hang with gang people. But I'm not. I don't go looking for trouble. I don't need to be in a gang because I can stand up for myself.

J.D.: I used to hang out with (the Latin Kings) ... smoke some pot, drink a few beers and go party. It's a form of protection. My gang friends are like a part of my family. And when you're in a gang, you're in it for life.

HERALD: What about drugs?

BECKY: Drugs aren't a problem for me. I tried (drugs) a couple of times and I didn't like it. But there's no pressure to do it. I have a couple of friends who are pot-heads and I don't want to be like them.

"There's a lot of violence in school ... even in a good school."

Cory

GRAYSON: Drugs are everywhere. I have a lot of pressure from friends to do drugs, mostly pot and LSD. And

I've done marijuana. Liked it. But I wouldn't need it to fit in if it wasn't around.

MELVIN: A lot of my friends do drugs. I've done a few. But if I don't want to do any, my friends respect that.

J.D.: There are so many drugs out there now. My friends used to say you're a geek if you didn't do drugs. But teenagers have gotten smarter. I do a few drugs now ... mostly acid and a few brews with the guys.

HERALD: What about pressures from school?

BECKY: The courses are fine if you pay attention and do your work. You can get through. But they're kind of strict. About the worst thing I've done is call a teacher a bitch because she wouldn't let me go to the bathroom.

"I think they should take all the guns in the world and get rid of them."

Becky

CORY: There's a lot of violence in school ... even in a good school.

GRAYSON: Teachers have to favor you before you can get anywhere in their class. And friends are always pressuring you to skip school, do drugs and drink. It's the pressure to fit in and be one of the crowd.

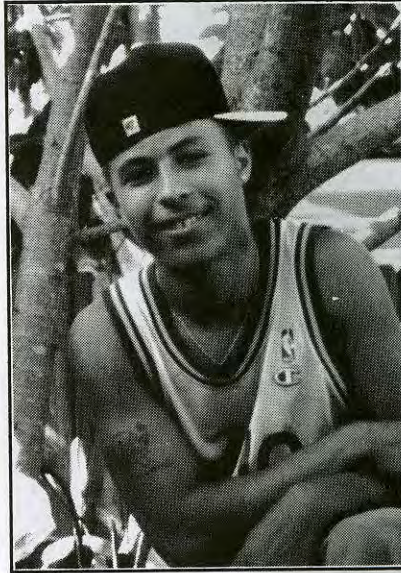
HERALD: Do many students bring guns to school?

BECKY: There are no guns in our school that I know of. Drugs, yes. Some kids bring drugs to school every day. I think they should take all the guns in the world and get rid of them. I don't like guns.

CORY: There's no reason for guns to be in a young person's life. But there's pressure not knowing if someone is carrying a gun or not. I don't associate with people who carry guns.

Some people just feel that a gun is their only form of protection.

GRAYSON: I know a few guys who bring guns to school, but not any of my friends. I don't start fights, so I don't have to watch my back. But the thought has crossed my mind that a guy I just fought with will come back and want to kill you. That's why you need a lot of friends ... to watch your back.



"My friends used to say you're a geek if you didn't do drugs. But teenagers have gotten smarter."

J.D.

HERALD: Are teenagers afraid of other teenagers?

GRAYSON: Not really. But you have to be careful. If I'm walking down to the store, somebody will yell something out the window of a car. If you say anything back, you will start a fight. You don't say anything, you don't look back. You just ignore it.

BECKY: It's nice to have friends watching your back.

J.D.: It's all about being street-smart. And you have to watch your back. No one else will do it for you.

HERALD: What about sex? Is there a lot of pressure?

BECKY: If I meet a guy I like, I tell him from the beginning. I'm scared to do it. I'm only 14, so they don't really try anything.

GRAYSON: It's not as big a problem as most people think. With AIDS and the possibility of getting some girl pregnant, you have to watch what you do. But there's no pressure (to have sex).

MELVIN: I worry about diseases. There's too much out there. You don't know who has it.

HERALD: Are teenagers concerned about AIDS?

J.D.: Yes. I haven't slept with anybody but my girlfriend. We all know AIDS is a serious thing. I know a lot of females that are more scared of AIDS than they are of getting pregnant.

CORY: It worries me. And it prevents me from doing things that, at the moment, I want to do. When it comes right down to it, no one thinks they will get it. The only answer is to have no sex at all. But that's unreasonable.

HERALD: Do you think grown-ups misunderstand teenagers?

GRAYSON: Yes. We don't do half the stuff they blame us for. And they don't give us a chance. They stereotype us. They don't talk to us. And it's unfair that they prejudice us. They don't know what goes on in our minds ... what we really think. They should get to know us. They would find out we're not as bad as we seem.

HERALD: Is it tougher to grow up in a single-parent household?

"I don't need to be in a gang because I can stand up for myself."

Melvin

BECKY: Yes, it's harder. You don't have two parents bringing money in. And the discipline isn't that strong, especially when my mom is away from home working. I think I need more discipline. I wouldn't like it, but I probably need it.

CORY: My father moved out when I was 4 years old. That made things a lot harder on my mother. And it made it harder on me. My mom was out trying to support me, and I had to be a mom for my younger brother. I had to grow up young. But I had to do it for my mom.

GRAYSON: It's definitely harder on my mother. And it makes it harder on the kids, too.

"The grown-ups don't think we're going to amount to anything."

Grayson

MELVIN: I tend to say I hate my dad. But I don't hate him for being my father. I hate him for what he is. My mom had to make it on her own ... with three kids.

J.D.: It would have been a lot easier if I had a father at home. I haven't talked to him since I was 10. There was no one to give me any discipline ... no one to tell me right from wrong.

HERALD: If you could choose one thing to change in your life, what would it be?

CORY: I wouldn't have done the things I did to lose my mother's trust.

GRAYSON: I would want to have a father-figure. I'm sure it would help my mom raise two teenagers. And I don't think it would hurt us (his sister) to have a little more discipline.

J.D.: I would not have gotten involved with a gang. And I wouldn't have denied half of my culture.

BECKY: I would change the way I've done in school. I know I can do it, but I'm just too lazy. This year I'm going to do better.

Who Says Day Care Can't Be Fun?

By Claudia Ayers and Crystal Harris

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the winter issue of The Circles and is reprinted here because of the wide interest in educational activities for children. We realize that educational approaches to children are subject to a wide range of styles and preferences by parents, especially when it comes to spiritual matters. We plan to develop a column in The Study Group Herald on the educational approaches that people are developing for children. Please send your comments, concerns, ideas and experiences on this subject to the Education Department, Study Group Herald, The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

In our program for children ages 7 to 9 at IC93, the daily themes paralleled those of the adults, including "Who Is God" and "Who Is My Neighbor." Crystal Harris drew from literature on spiritual development and some beautiful booklets created by Kaye Cooper and Patrick Yesh to prepare a diversified program with music, workshops and free play.

Our 16 participants entered into their activities with a sense of purpose and satisfaction because they, like their parents, were coming to a special international conference to share experiences related to *The Urantia Book*.

Each day we sang, played and participated in two workshops. The format for the workshops followed a pattern. First, all participants shared their thoughts and knowledge on the topic. Then Crystal presented the concept by either reading from *The Urantia Book* or another book, telling a story, or in the case of the story of Job, by involving the children in a puppetry pageant. Finally, we had an activity based on the topic (like making tissue paper flowers for our garden after discussing the Parable of the Sower).

We began our first workshop with Kaye Cooper's booklet, *Getting to Know God*, and later focused another workshop on Patrick Yesh's coloring book, *Angels All Around Us*.

The children were eager to participate in all aspects of our program. We marveled at how willingly and enthusiastically the kids talked about their images of God, their concepts of death and heaven, and many other topics, like suffering, angels, Jesus, dreams, traveling, brothers and sisters, having fun, and helping. One child, Kai, enjoyed this one because, "We don't usually do things like this at conferences." Even our teen helpers said they had learned spiritual concepts in our workshops.

Crystal did extensive research and planning for the program. Julie Dubuc masterminded the program, with the idea of involving the teens in the programs of the younger children. Julie also presented a workshop that our kids will long remember: Making Harmony Sticks and playing with



them. It was incredibly satisfying for us to enjoy the company and experiences of these children.

We are certain that children are interested in and capable of discussing and learning more about spiritual ideas. We'd like more opportunities for their interests and talents to be developed at future conferences.

Our kids were thrilled to be part of the entertainment and worship events, and we feel they have more to offer here as well. A few multi-age workshops could be planned in the future to open the program to a greater extent for children this age and older.

Spiritual Day Care: Getting Started

Here are some resources we found helpful:

* Kaye Cooper, *Getting to Know God, A Spiritual Living Book for Children*. Available from Good Cheer Press.

* Patrick Yesh, *Angels All Around Us Coloring Book*. Available from Good Cheer Press.

* Mary Ebben, *Young Reader's Guide to The Urantia Book*. Available from Mary Ebben, 771 Victoria Court, Lafayette, CO 80026.

* Annette Hollander, *How to Help Your Child Have a Spiritual Life*, 1980.

* James Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 1981.

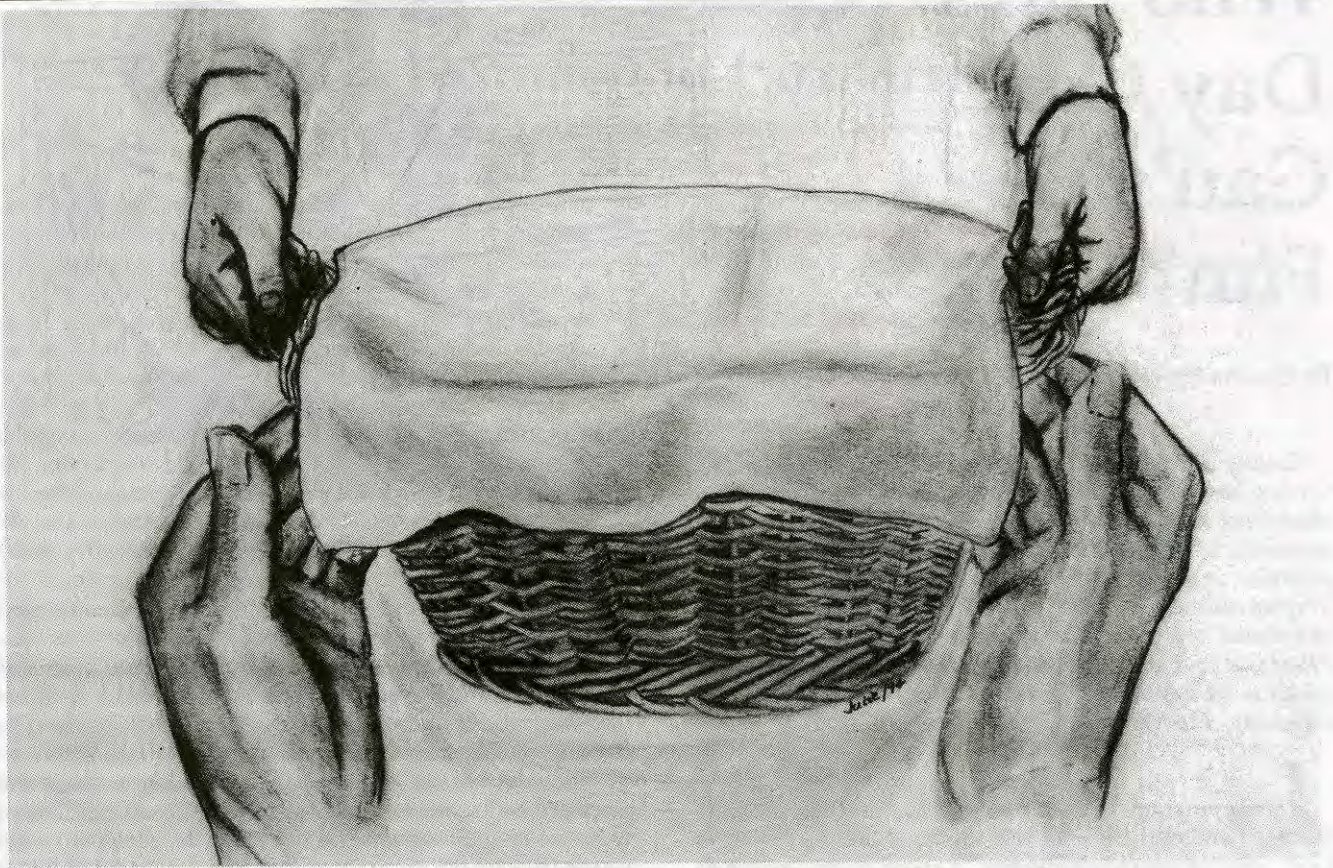
* Dorothy Furnish, *Living The Bible With Children*.

* Gay Hendricks and Russel Wills, *The Centering Book*.

* David Heller, *Talking To Your Child About God*.

* Joanne Taylor, *Innocent Wisdom*.





The Burden of the Basket

By Wayne Ferrier, Williamsport, Pennsylvania

"Master, I have a basket of figs, bread and drink for your journey," said John Mark, the apostles' errand boy. John Mark was always looking after the group, so it was not unusual that he wanted Jesus to have provisions for his walk.

Jesus reached for the basket, but John Mark didn't let go. There they stood, Jesus and John Mark holding the basket.

"Let me carry it for you," said John Mark. "You might set it down while you pray and forget about it. If I go along, you won't have to worry and can freely worship.

"I won't ask any questions and promise to be silent."

Some of the bystanders took notice of how intently John Mark was talking with Jesus as both still held the basket.

After a moment, Jesus let go and said: "Since with all your heart you wish to come along, I cannot deny you. You may ask me any question you like and we'll share the burden of the basket."

As they left the camp, John Mark walked beside Jesus with a smile stretched across his face. When they reached the hilltop, they saw Jerusalem in the distance. They continued over the ridge

and into a valley. Since they were alone on this hike, John Mark took the opportunity to share his thoughts.

"Master," he said, as Jesus sat down on a boulder to rest. "My ambition is to be like the apostles. If only I could have spent more time with you, I might have learned how to talk to the multitudes. I need more training. You can correct misunderstandings in my heart and show me how to speak of the kingdom so that all can understand. There is so much I wish to do for you. But I feel I'm not ready. And now you say you will be leaving us."

"I can depend on you doing important things for the kingdom after I am away," Jesus said. "So I am not concerned."

"But had I been an apostle," John Mark insisted, "I might have learned so much more."

"John Mark, you have always made wise use of your time," Jesus said. "I know whenever you can, you are nearby listening. You have learned much, but it is not only what you have heard that assures me. It is your character that gladdens me. You are more capable than

you know."

They sat quietly for a while. John Mark handed Jesus food from the basket. He was still wrestling with the thought of Jesus leaving.

John Mark remembered when he first joined Jesus and the apostles. He had introduced his friend Amos to Jesus. Amos and John Mark both desired to follow Jesus and the apostles. They were young, but although Amos believed in the kingdom, his parents would not consent. He couldn't join the Apostles. Amos had even considered running away from home, but he didn't want to hurt his parents.

"Your parents were wise as well as loving," said Jesus, seeming to read John Mark's thoughts. "They did not make you choose between service to God and loyalty to family. They allowed you to have these valuable experiences. And although your parents are wealthy, they never spoiled you."

After more hiking through the hills, John Mark and Jesus stopped to catch their breath and admire the view before starting back to the camp.

Continued On Next Page

John Mark's thoughts strayed back to earlier that morning. At breakfast in the camp, everyone had been thinking over recent events.

During the last week Jesus had told the apostles that the time had come to join the Father and be about his business in Heaven. He had promised to return some time in the future, but talk of his return confused the apostles more than it assured them. They were distraught. Not a word had been spoken that morning; then Jesus broke the silence.

"I intend to be absent today so that I may commune with the Father. I desire that you rest and think about what I have told you."

David Zebedee, brother of the Apostles James and John Zebedee, thought it was too dangerous for Jesus to venture away by himself. He knew the Jerusalem rulers were trying to capture Jesus. He wanted to send three armed men along for his protection, but Jesus refused the offer.

"Thanks, my friend," Jesus said. "But these men may not come with me. I wish to be alone. Besides, no harm will come to me."

As Jesus had turned and started to leave the camp, John Mark seized the moment. He had hurried to Jesus with the basket of bread, figs and drink. At last, Jesus had given in and allowed him to come along.

In the past few years, Jesus had often been surrounded by multitudes. Sometimes he spent time alone with the apostles, but rarely did one of the disciples and followers have a chance to be alone with him while he communed with the Father.

On this day in the hills, John Mark was envied by the apostles and disciples. He was able to spend hours alone with Jesus. Later in life, John Mark would often remember this day.

It would be the last day of rest for Jesus before he was crucified. John Mark didn't know at the time that, as an older man, he would write one of the four gospels filled with his memories of Jesus and the apostles.

Nor was John Mark aware of the angels who were watching Jesus' every move. In the worlds on high, this day became known as the day a young man spent with God in the hills.

Divorce: To Do or Not To Do?



Editor's Note: This is a story about someone who has regrets and wishes things could have been different. This person wishes to remain anonymous.

As a teenager I thought that when I finished my education I would get married. It was my desire to find the right mate and stay with him forever ... through good times and bad times, sickness and health, richer or poorer, till death do us part. I believed this was the way it should be.

Now I know that it is possible to lose touch with your mate, to grow apart. There is no way to define the process, but it happens.

For several years I tried to interest my husband in *The Urantia Book*, but he very tactfully declined any part of it, except the teachings of God and Jesus. I was taken by this bold, new work of truth that seemed so right.

The more I read, the more I wanted to share it with others. I ventured out to meet other readers of the book, though my husband declined to go with me. After a few meetings, he began to resent my going, so I backed off. But only for a short while.

The study I did in my quiet time was wonderful, but I wanted to have interaction with other readers. I had met several people with whom I could discuss the concepts of *The Urantia Book* in a fulfilling way and I wanted to be with them.

The craving to study *The Urantia Book* changed my life and I eventually became more involved in a study group.

I met a man who was kind, intelligent, interesting and had a good background in religion. He knew the Bible well and liked reading *The Urantia Book*. You can imagine the consequences of this situation.

I made a bold choice to separate from my husband, and after a short time I realized that I wanted a divorce. I was tired of hanging on by a slim thread and

suppressing my desire to be with other readers of *The Urantia Book*.

I was forever wondering if I had done right or wrong and if I could I ever reconcile the decision. I couldn't stop thinking about the pain I had caused.

Although I'll never know unless God shows me, I'll always ponder my choice. Sometimes it is hard to know which path the Heavenly Father would have us take.

Disappointments are considered a plus, not a minus, because we gain sympathetic understanding in the process of feeling the pain while enduring the experience. We also come closer to our Heavenly Father.

If you ever go through a divorce, I sympathize with you, but I couldn't tell you what is best. The importance of making decisions comes with painful growth.

A strong family life depends on the character of the man and the woman as well as the two together.

In Paper 153, Jesus stresses the need to forget the past and continue going forward in life. He says that your sins are forgiven and you must forgive yourself and go on.

He even tells us not to harbor guilt. This is one of the most difficult feelings to overcome. Guilt is poison to the soul and mind. Instead, I choose to pray for others, serve my fellows and practice the religion of Jesus.

Divorce was one situation that Jesus didn't experience. I don't think he would ever consider such a thing. The pattern of the universe is decidedly a matter of complete loyalty to one another.

I can hear my father say, "Don't take yourself so seriously. You are just a babe in God's eyes and He understands you."

Men and Women in Partnership

By Claudia Ayers and Larry Watkins, Sacramento, California

Contemporary writers often express the viewpoint that men and women are essentially alike in goals and aspirations, mental function and social needs. Except for biologic disparity, the differences between men and women are frequently assumed to be manifestations of socialization processes. These suppositions are not supported by *The Urantia Book*.

In our study of the complementary natures and potential of men and women in partnership, we depict, contrary to these current contentions, the emphasis of *The Urantia Book* that women and men are not essentially the same nor are we expected to achieve the same goals. (See Group 1 quotes.)

We are created as two distinct types of beings, two varieties of the same species. This is not a cosmic mistake. There is meaning and plan to such diversity. Distinctly different, the sexes are frameworks upon which our mortal characters express divine potentials, particularly in developing creative partnerships. Teamwork and cooperation between men and women are essential to human development. (See Group 2 quotes.)

A number of current articles and books acknowledge that gender differences are real and they show up early. An article in *Redbook* (Sept. 1992, Susan Chira) says, "From the moment they enter the classroom, boys and girls tend to behave differently."

In a popular book, *You Just Don't Understand*, Deborah Tannen relates after observing second graders, "Comparing the boys and girls of the same age I had the feeling I was looking at two different species." She goes on to say that even from early childhood, males learn to get status and identity from independence while females gain standing by developing intimacy. Men's interest in the details of politics, news and sports seems to parallel women's interest in the details of personal lives. The game women play is "Do you like me?" The game men play is "Do you respect me?"

An article by Lori Andrews in *Parents* (April 1986) explains that "males tend to view themselves more as individuals, while females view themselves as part of a web of relationships."

As a result, the ways men and women communicate with each other are often confusing.

Tannen captured a concern of many women when she wrote, "Some women fear, with justification, that any observation of gender differences will be heard as implying that it is women who are different -- different from the standard, which is whatever men are. The male is seen as normative; the female as departing from the norm."

She went on to say, "Pretending that women and men are the same hurts women, because the ways they are treated are based on the norms for men."

Men tend to use an interaction style which challenges authority and jockeys for position. They gain status by asserting an individual and independent view. Most women tend to seek interconnectedness, intimacy, relating by consensus, group processing, cooperation and gain status when well liked.

A man who believes he treats women and men equally may be using the same masculine communications style with

women that he uses with men, a style which can cause hard feelings among women.

While there is considerable overlap in the following list of characteristics, studies generally support the following gender-related character traits:

Males generally are:

independent
objective
active
competitive
logical
decision makers
providers
directors
aggressive
bold
courageous
strong
autocratic
spatial thinkers
motivators
specialty teachers
selfish
doers

Females generally are:

interconnected
subjective
neat
tactful
intuitive
collaborative workers
nurturers
comforters
passive
patient and kind
gentle and meek
sensitive and sincere
democratic
artistic
responsive
generalists
selfless
good listeners

Even though *The Urantia Book* confirms that men and women are not essentially the same nor expected to achieve the same goals, from a feminist point of view it has some surprising things to say in support of basic feminist attitudes on equal rights. (See Group 3 quotes.)

Numerous accounts of the historical struggle between men and women are given in *The Urantia Book*. (See Group 4 quotes.)

Many other passages relate the values of partnership, especially in relationship to the family. (See Group 5 quotes.)

The role religion plays in retarding the progress of equality between men and women is evident. (See Group 6 quotes.)

The revealed religion of *The Urantia Book* may do more to discourage and neutralize the dominating role men have held over women than has been proclaimed since Jesus was among us. The message to be taken to contemporary social policy idealists is: Be aware that inherent differences between the sexes have value and must not be pushed aside in the otherwise appropriate goal of obtaining equal rights for women.

Jesus is the role model for the development of our character. The primary intent of Jesus' earth mission was spiritual. His life demonstrated the gospel of the kingdom, the family relationship between God and creatures.

Jesus was successful in staying clear of the social and political issues of his times. Yet, to those with the eyes to see, he demonstrated a sociopolitical ideal in gender relations. Furthermore, in one being, he exemplified the ideal character values for both masculine and feminine roles. (See Group 7 quotes.)

There is a divine plan exalting the relationship between

masculine and feminine personality revealed in *The Urantia Book*. It is portrayed in the relationship between the Creator Son and the Creative Mother Spirit. Their roles are dissimilar, yet they work in harmony for the benefit of all their creation. In this divine relationship are symbolized appropriate gender roles for mortals. As we work to develop our potentials through partnership relationships, this important celestial relationship becomes our most meaningful study. (See Group 8 quotes.)

Group 7 -- Jesus' Character Values

1548 Paper 139

Group 8 -- Mortal Roles

368:1-369:3 3. The Universe Son and Spirit.../the other.
377:7-378:1 The Creator Son.../Holy Spirit.

Quotes for Study

Group 1 -- Men and Women Are Not the Same

Page	Begins With/Ends With
774:7	Differentiation based on diverse.../skilled labor.
936:7-938:4	The modern idea.../equal terms.
938:6-939:3	The partnership.../husband and wife.
1220:5	Snow crystals are.../always unique.

Group 2 -- Cooperation Is A Necessity

312:2	There are the.../your fellows.
763:7-764:1	Primitive human.../human civilization.
932:6	Regardless of the.../happiness.
1220:6	Happiness and joy.../with others.
1477:1	Mathematics asserts.../its parts.
1775:2-1777:1	2. The Art of Living.../of maturity.

Group 3 -- Attitudes of Equality

591:7-592:1	This is the.../family life.
927:2-928:2	6. True Monogamy.../self-perpetuation.
930:4,5	The ideals of.../past generations.
937:4	Science.../woman power.
1679:2	It was most.../out in practice.
1839:2	And so, while Jesus refused.../divorce privileges.

Group 4 -- Struggle Between Men and Women

774:1	Specialization based.../furnishing the home.
778:8	When man was.../human history.
929:1,2	The high degree.../evolving mores.
934:6-935:1	Woman has always.../methods of labor.
935:1-936:4	4. Woman's Status.../mode of existence.
937:7-938:4	In the ideals.../equal terms.

Group 5 -- Value of Partnership

765:5	Almost everything.../to their children.
930:2-5	Marriage always.../generations.
931:5	Woman, because.../children.
933:6	It may.../patriarchal order.
939:3	Marriage is the.../husband and wife.
940:4,5	But the home.../her way.

Group 6 -- Religion Retarding Equality

934:1	The scant courtesy.../shepherd.
977:1,2	It was only.../followers.
1840:3	Woman's status.../taught them.
2065:2	Before the teachings.../liberty.

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Topical Study

Abortion and *The Urantia Book*

By the Lincoln City, Oregon Study Group:
Lissa & Douglas Parker, Janet Arnold, John Graves and Judith Mace

The religious issue of abortion centers around the perception that abortion takes away eternal life. In reality, no human possesses the capability to deprive any other being of eternal life. Such an event can occur only as the result of a personal, repletely knowledgeable decision regarding the consequences of such a decision.

When death occurs before the decision regarding eternal life can be made, the being is held in trustworthy limbo until one or the other of its natal parents arrives and is then repersonalized to continue its life process.

There also exists sufficient information for supposing that if a fetus is aborted, by any process, before endowment with mind function (which is more than brain function) that human potential and its accompanying life energies are absorbed into the sources from which they sprang.

Remember that all pregnant females may experience a natural abortion, usually during the first third of their gestation. Nothing of love, truth, beauty or goodness is ever lost in all the universe of universes.

The following excerpts from *The Urantia Book*, designated by page and paragraph will provide further conceptual enhancement.

Page	Begins With/Ends With
8:6-9:2	These qualities/morontial soul.
5551:7	You should/local universe.
71:1-3,7	Capacity for/of free will.
1186:6-1187:2	Adjusters reach/moral choice.
69:6-70:1	Eternal survival/immortal soul.
1478:5	The soul is/of the soul.
195:5-6	... from its earliest/of the soul.
1230:2	Intellectual (mind)/may survive
403:6	Non-spiritual mind/crave survival.
409:5-6	The worlds of/from death.
531:5	The infant-receiving/morontia worlds.
516:2	On the seven/system capitals.
516:6	This probation/the inhabited worlds.
1233:6	This does not/real purpose.



Family Life Values Survey

We need your help to establish services for readers of *The Urantia Book* to promote quality family experiences. This work is sponsored by the ad hoc Family Life committee of The Fellowship in response to inquiries about special resources and programs developed for *Urantia Book* reader families.

Please take a moment to fill out the survey and send it to The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 or fax to (312) 327-6159.

“The family is the fundamental unit of fraternity in which parents and children learn those lessons of patience, altruism, tolerance, and forbearance which are so essential to the realization of brotherhood among all men.”

(*The Urantia Book*, pg. 941)



What best describes your family?

- Two-parent family
- Single-parent family
- Blended family (step family)
- Extended family (Grandparent residing with child or parenting grandchild)
- Partners without children
- Multiple families
- Mixed race family
- Mixed religion family

Other: _____

Please rank resources for family life which are most important to you using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest priority.

- Premarital training
- Parenting materials based on principles of *The Urantia Book*:
 - Newborn to 5 years
 - 6 to 12 years
 - 13 to 18 years
- Study guides for children

- Study guides for teens
- Stories for children from *The Urantia Book*
- Conflict resolution for the family
- Single parenting
- Cross cultural similarities and differences
- Intergenerational issues such as caring for the elderly
- Secondary works on family practices
- Death and dying within the family
- Step parenting
- Interracial marriages
- Homosexual issues
- Interfaith marriages
- Chosen family groups
- Family meetings
- Supportive partnerships
- Disabilities in the home
- Teen rites of passage
- Divorce

“The child must derive his first impressions of the universe from the mother’s care; he is wholly dependent on the earthly father for his first ideas of the heavenly Father.”

(*The Urantia Book*, pg. 1922)





“The true parent is engaged in a continuous service-ministry which the wise child comes to recognize and appreciate.”
(*The Urantia Book*, pg. 941)

Please rank activities which the Family Life committee should sponsor, using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the highest priority.

- ___ Wrightwood Series on spiritual family culture
- ___ Secondary works to introduce *The Urantia Book* to children
- ___ Secondary works to introduce *The Urantia Book* to teens
- ___ Marriage training seminar
- ___ Guiding children in the teachings of Jesus seminar
- ___ Supporting the grieving process seminar
- ___ Supporting the dying process seminar
- ___ Publishing conference presentations on family life values
- ___ Brochure illustrating *The Urantia Book's* emphasis on family
- ___ Conference workshops on family life
- ___ Family-oriented bulletin board on Internet
- ___ Family camps for readers of *The Urantia Book*
- ___ Hotline service for families in need
- ___ Publishing what organized religions are doing to reinforce family life

Other: _____

If your family participates in organized religious activities, do these activities promote a healthy and happy home life?

- ___ Very good experience
- ___ Satisfactory
- ___ Doesn't fulfill our needs

Please list the greatest challenges of parenting:

Please list the greatest joys and accomplishments of parenting:



“It is the divine will that men and women should find their highest service and consequent joy in the establishment of homes for the reception and training of children, in the creation of whom these parents become co-partners with the Makers of heaven and earth.”

(*The Urantia Book*, pg. 1839)

Are there activities of the Family Life committee in which you would like to participate?

Additional comments:

Thank you for your valuable information. If you would like this survey to include your name and address, please fill in that information below:

Optional

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____

Please mail or fax the completed survey to:

The Fellowship
 529 Wrightwood Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60614
 U.S.A.
 (312) 327-0424 Voice
 (312) 327-6159 FAX

“Fatherly love has singleness of purpose, and it always looks for the best in man; that is the attitude of a true parent.”

(*The Urantia Book*, pg. 1574)



Topical Study

Planetary Government of Urantia

Additional Definitions and References

By Larry Geis and Stephen Zendt, San Francisco

It can get confusing to keep track of who does what in the administration of spiritual affairs on our planet. This topical study will help clarify the different roles of the many celestial beings charged with managing this small, but significant planet in the system of Satania.

Title	Page		
Associate Inspector	413		
Resident on Salvington, capital of Nebadon; personal representative of the Supreme Executive of Orvonton.			
Assigned Sentinel of Satania	268		
Coordinating personality and liaison representative, advisor and observer. Ex officio head of 24 Counselors, but does not participate in deliberations on system affairs.			
Brilliant Evening Stars	232		
Represent Gabriel. Easily visible to morontia personalities and supermortal material beings. Possess a spirit force that can manifest itself independently of personal presence. Firstborn in Nebadon is Gavalia, now assigned by Michael to the ascendant ministry, along with his associate Galantia, who maintains liaison contact with Michael for the 24 Counselors.			
Four and Twenty Counselors	513		
Michael's personal agents on Jerusem, functioning somewhat like a legislative branch of government. Also manage affairs of 36 other isolated planets. One serves as Resident Governor General, the coordinator of all superhuman administration, who is more of a fatherly advisor than a technical ruler. This position rotates every 100 years. The cabinet consists of heads of 12 divisions of Master Seraphim.			
Chief of Resident Life Carriers	400		
One of 12 who elected to remain on Urantia after appearance of will creatures and the arrival of the Planetary Prince.			
Commanding Archangel	408		
Supreme authority in exclusively spiritual problems and certain personal matters. Maintains a divisional headquarters recently established on Urantia by Michael.			
Chief of Seraphim	298		
A Primary Supernaphim of Paradise in command of all ministering spirits. Rotates periodically on special assignment to this rebellion world. Her associate chief is Manotia, the Loyal Seraphic Commander of Jerusem. She is further supported by 1,000 Administrative Assistant Seraphim and certain specialized angels whose work extends through morontial and spiritual levels. They are grouped as follows:			
Planetary Helpers	437		
* Voices of the Garden (Solonia, et al)			
* Spirits of Brotherhood			
* Souls of Peace (Vevona, et al)			
* Spirits of Trust			
* Transporters			
* Recorders			
* Reserves			
Transition Ministers	551		
* Seraphic Evangelists			
* Racial Interpreters			
* Mind Planners			
* Morontia Counselors			
* Technicians			
* Recorders/Teachers			
* Ministering Reserves			
Master Physical Controllers	325		
* 10 Mechanical Controllers			
* 100 Energy Transformers			
* 1,000 Energy Transmitters			
* Primary Associators/Secondary Disassociators			
* Frandalanks/Chronoldeks			
Most High Observer	389-91		
A Vorondadek Son, one of 12 governing Edentia, our Constellation headquarters. In the event of a planetary crisis, this Son may seize authority and function as sovereign. He has done so 33 times in the past, at which time he employed a "full and complete staff" and received unsought support from three Personalized Adjusters.			
Personalized Adjusters	1201-2		
The personal ministers of the extraordinary, unusual and unexpected in all the realms.			
Race Commissioners	275		
Perfectured Spirit-fused beings/mortals who function as "friends of the court" to ensure mercy, justice and fair treatment for all evolving races.			
Conciliating Commission	275-79		
When petitioned by personalities in conflict, these ministers resolve differences and have supreme authority to put their decisions into effect. There are three judges and a quasi-material "fourth creature," the Divine Executioner, who has great power and range of activity on an inhabited world, including command of the Master Physical Controllers.			
Celestial Artisans	497-508		
An entire paper is devoted to their unfathomable and multi-faceted endeavors.			

Nebadon

ASSOCIATE INSPECTOR

URANTIA'S PLANETARY GOVERNMENT

based on material found in Paper 114, "Seraphic Planetary Government" in The URANTIA BOOK

MICHAEL OF NEBADON
Titular Planetary Prince

Norlatiadek

THE MOST HIGHS (12)

GABRIEL

Satania

ASSIGNED SENTINEL

ADAM . EVE . ENOCH . MOSES . ELUAH . JOHN THE BAPTIST - 123 1ST EIGHT EARLY URANTIAN TEACHERS . EIGHT TEMPORARY MEMBERS

GALANTIA
Brilliant Evening Star

Machiventa Melchizedek
Vicegerent Planetary Prince

Archangels' Circuit

Urantia

Most High Observer

Resident Governor General

Commanding Archangel

CONCILIATING COMMISSION

Judge - Arbiter
Spirit Advocate
Divine Executioner
Recorder

RACE COMMISSIONERS

Chief of Seraphim

Chief of Resident Life Carriers

MASTER PHYSICAL CONTROLLERS



Celestial Artisans

Epochal

Progress

Religion

Nation Life

Race

Future

Enlightenment

Health

Home

Industry

Diversion

Superhuman Ministry

TWELVE GROUPS OF MASTER SERAPHIM

Primary Midway Creatures (9881)

UNITED MIDWAY CREATURES

Secondary Midway Creatures (11111)

RESERVE CORPS OF DESTINY

(HUMAN BEINGS)

COSMIC RESERVE CORPS

Study Groups of Arizona

Greetings, fellow readers of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. With this issue of The Study Group Herald, we are going to meet the study groups in Arizona. This state is home to the Grand Canyon Society of the Fellowship. And, as you read about each study group in this southwestern state, you'll see that the groups are not only well established but very active in their efforts to promote The Urantia Book.

Moon Valley Study Group

PHOENIX -- The Moon Valley *Urantia Book* Study Group is located in north Phoenix at the home of Sue Smith. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., with fellowship and refreshments until 8 p.m. Study ends at 9:30 p.m.

Sometimes we begin with prayer or meditative music, but it isn't a ritual.

When Sue is out of town, there is always an alternate meeting place. We are committed to our study.

We read sequentially and have tried other methods. Sometimes a paper is completed, but discussion on the topic takes precedence.

New readers are always welcome. When a person is new to the book, sometimes we prefer to have several sessions of one to one until the new reader feels comfortable attending a group.

New readers come from several sources. The Grand Canyon Society for Readers of *The Urantia Book* provides a telephone answering service and newspaper advertising that attracts as many as 30 calls a week. Phone messages are screened and passed along to the appropriate study group.

In Arizona a study group is conveniently located in many areas all over the state and scheduled every night of the week.

The Moon Valley study group averages five people, but sometimes can be as many as 18, covering all age ranges and equal numbers of men and women.

Sue Smith found *The Urantia Book* in Hawaii in 1974 and in 1976 began a study group that has been going on ever since, wherever she goes. She has been

a devout worshipper in the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, singing in the choirs and teaching classes to children and adults. She also worked with the Hawaii Council of Churches for seven years. She and her husband Bob moved to Phoenix in 1984 and started this study group. Sue reads *The Urantia Book* because its beautiful teachings soothe her heart and mind and bring her closer to understanding the grace of our loving Heavenly Father.

Paul Christofanelli found *The Urantia Book* in 1978 in a library. He is from a Catholic/Episcopalian tradition and finds *The Urantia Book* educational and challenging. He has attended our study group since 1990.

Mary Ann Goysich found *The Urantia Book* in her chiropractor's waiting room. She is of Catholic tradition and has been with the group about two years. Mary Ann studies *The Urantia Book* as an extension of scripture. It helps her to keep an open mind.

Don Knox found *The Urantia Book* via his tax accountant. He was brought up Jewish, but started to search out the study of all religions. He is a dedicated reader and enjoys study of *The Urantia Book*. He has attended this study group since 1985.

Others who attend our study group

are Shawn Greer, Susie Conser Hughes, Beth Wenger, Eric Cosh, Mike Knoll and Marge Socwell.

We truly miss the presence of J.J. and Geri Johnson, who were so faithful in attending our study group and sharing. They have moved to Saudi Arabia.

Our study group has a collection each week for donations to buy books to introduce to new readers. To date, two books have been sent to Russia, one to Bogota, Colombia, one is on a Pacific cruise ship and four have been placed in local libraries.

West Side Study Group

By Arley Grubb

PHOENIX -- The West Phoenix Study Group has been meeting since it was formed in April 1990 at the home of Arley and Rhonda Grubb. We meet weekly at 8 p.m. and read sequentially.

During the summer everything seems to slow down in the desert. Two weeks ago no one showed up for the meeting. That was a first for us. It might have had something to do with the NBA finals.

Usually, five to seven people attend on a regular basis, but it's never the same folks except the core of four. They are: Arley, a *Urantia Book* student for



Some readers in the Moon Valley study group have discovered *The Urantia Book*, curiously enough, through professionals who have the book.

seven years; Rhonda, a *Urantia Book* reader for the past two years; Marc Neubauer, a *Urantia Book* student for five years, and Robert Terhune, a *Urantia Book* reader who found the book in the early 1970s.

We are members of the Grand Canyon Society. Rhonda was recently re-elected vice president.

We have just started a new project called "Books for Bogota." A reader here has been in contact with Carlos (Zapata) in Bogota, Colombia. According to Carlos, there are eight study groups in Bogota with about seven people attending each meeting regularly. They are excited about the Spanish translation which is now available and Carlos has asked for help getting the book. In Bogota, \$55 is a whole lot of pesos.

We as a study group have gathered enough funds to purchase and ship three books by air mail. Altogether, from individuals, the other study groups in the valley and Grand Canyon Society, we have commitments for 13 books. If anyone wants to get involved, contact Arley Grubb at (602) 841-7649.

The latest news is the Grand Canyon Society recently decided to adopt Bogota as its sister city for readers of *The Urantia Book*.

There are two other meetings that go on here in the Valley of the Sun on a monthly basis. First is the Statewide Meeting held on the second Saturday. This meeting has been going on for the past six years. Each month it is held in a different place in the state. The majority of these meetings begin with a pot-luck meal and end with some sort of a meeting on the teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

The second gathering is a recent addition to the Arizona repertoire of reader activities. This meeting is sometimes very intense. Each topic or paper is hosted by a different individual. Marc has taken on the Adjuster Papers, and our next meeting will be the fourth in his series with one more gathering required to finish properly. This is the meeting where everyone is encouraged to comment and ask all of those silly questions you never wanted to ask before. The results have been very good. All that attend say they have learned from this approach. We try to cover



The West Side study group works together to place Urantia Books around the world, having sent copies to Russia and South America.

everything.

Last, but not least, Mo Siegel from the Jesusonian Foundation, was here recently to conduct an outreach meeting for new readers or interested parties. About 35 people attended and 10 or 12 were new. There have been follow-up meetings once a week and it looks like one or two new readers will be added to our roster.

Prescott Study Group

By Don Risk

PRESCOTT -- This group started meeting around 1975, and continued off and on until about 1982. Since 1985, we have met quite regularly, with several of the same people through the years. During this latter period, we have had as few as three regulars and as many as 10 or 12. Currently there are seven of us who attend every week.

Unfortunately, our present group is all male. We'd love to have some input from the distaff point of view. We've tried to recruit among female friends without any luck. Many of those who

are good candidates are too involved, we think, with *A Course in Miracles* or new age groups, which are very strong in our area.

Since our community is about 40 percent retirees, there is also a strong conservative flavor. (You could interpret that as "fundamentalist.")

With the exception of our one younger member, we run the age gamut from the mid 50s to 70s. We include a student, realtor, insurance agent, hospital maintenance man, yard maintenance man (who also has a Masters in Philosophy), retired clinical psychologist and a retired judge.

Our study format for the past couple of years has been as follows: We all read two papers on our own. We started with Paper 1 and are currently doing the first paper of Part IV. Each brings questions for discussion by the group. Sometimes we go back to some previous papers if it seems to be helpful in our thinking.

We have no leader as such, although our retirees seem to come up with the most thought-provoking questions. We have no prayer or worship and strictly

study, unless some sports discussion pops up. We utilize a 1938 *Webster's Dictionary*, *Concordax*, *Paramony* and *The Standard Revised Edition of The Bible*. One of our members has several of Barclay's commentaries on the New Testament, which can be quite good.

Our only social affair is an annual get-together in August, which is also usually a birthday remembrance for Michael combined with a picnic. Since we are about 20 degrees cooler here in the mountains than Phoenix or Tucson, we usually have a pretty good turnout.

The Sonoran Seekers

SCOTTSDALE -- The Thursday night Scottsdale study group, which has been meeting for several years at the home of Larry Bowman, started in the 1970s. Martha Watson, who studied with Meredith and Irene Sprunger in Fort Wayne, Indiana before moving to Phoenix, began studying with Herman and Edna Schell when the latter were still winter visitors from Chicago. Herman had been a member of the Forum and the First Urantia Society. After the Schells moved to Arizona in 1977, the study group became a more regular fixture. But like the group in Chicago, it would break for the sum-

mer.

Larry Bowman began attending in early 1978. He had joined the Forum as a teenager in the 1950s and had known Herman during those years. He helped organize celebrations of Jesus' birthday in 1978 and '79. Early in 1980, Herman became terminally ill and Larry assumed hosting responsibilities for the group. Since that time the group has been meeting year around.

Presently the group reads the book sequentially and is taking its time getting through Part One. For a long time it was felt that this group is not for beginners, but this perception changed last year when Lee and Millie Maxton began attending. They were both 70 and received a copy of *The Urantia Book* as a Christmas present from Lee's son, Terry, who studies in the Los Angeles area.

The group was studying Paper 14, The Central and Divine Universe, when the Maxtons showed up. Eric Cosh thought maybe we should read something else that night, but Larry suggested we stick to our game plan. While not comprehending the paper as well as others in the group, Lee and Millie were not daunted. They enjoyed the caliber of the discussion and enthusiastically returned the following weekend and have never stopped coming. Since then they have joined the Grand Canyon Society for Readers of *The Urantia Book*

and are now serving as officers of the society.

In business as well as spirituality, I have learned not to prejudice or underestimate the curiosity or tenacity of people, the perfect functioning of their Adjusters and the powers of three great spirit discerners of revelation: Michael's Spirit of Truth; the Mother Spirit's self-bestowing, adjutant sensitivities, and the mentally inherent "reality response." (191:7)

Among others who attend the group regularly are Dick and Peggy Johnson, and Eve McMahan. Although Larry is the host, he is not necessarily the leader. The group tends to lead itself and depends on the collective wisdom of its members, who together have about 100 years of readership. Most of the members of this group attend other study groups in the Phoenix area.

Because of the intensity of discussion, a meeting may not progress more than two or three sections a night, sometimes even only a few paragraphs. Anyone who can tolerate detailed conversation is welcome to attend our study group.

Tucson Study Group

By Sally Culwell

TUCSON -- Our study group is composed of about 14 people from all walks of life and ages.

Only three couples are married, the other readers are single. We read one paper a week, then discuss the topic or share other information from articles or a TV program that someone has read or seen, usually scientific discoveries that are in *The Urantia Book*.

We have a Christmas party pot luck, and last year the group went to the mountains for the August 21st birthday celebration.

We have been in the group since September 1993. Some people have read the book 20 years or more and have been in many study groups across the country. A number of people come infrequently, saying that they prefer to read on their own.

We have supplied a number of books to bookstores but don't do any active recruiting. We have no formal leader, although several of the long-time readers certainly have a better understanding of issues than the rest of us.



The Sonoran Seekers group is the longest-running study group in Arizona, dating from the 1970s.

The Urantia Book at the Parliament of World's Religions

By Paula J. Thompson, Boulder, Colorado

"The kingdom of Heaven is neither a social nor economic order; it is an exclusively spiritual brotherhood of God-knowing individuals." (*Urantia Book*, pg. 1088)

The first Parliament of World's Religions occurred in 1893 at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. The list of religions represented at that historic event reads like a Who's Who of 20th century religions.

As a matter of fact, the Baha'i faith made its debut at the 1893 Parliament. A century later the Parliament of World's Religions met again in the same city, at the same hotel, for the same purpose. But this time *The Urantia Book* and its readers made their debut.

Speaking only in terms of outreach, it is literally true that nearly every major faith in the world has become aware of *The Urantia Book* in some way as a result of this event. Many who came representing other faiths made it known to us that they also read and believe *The Urantia Book*.

The experience was nothing less than magical. By the second day I quit saying, "That's an interesting coincidence," and just relished in the joy of being wholly led by the spirit and the angels. I imagined the angels rejoicing for this great blending of faiths. I felt their satisfaction for a job well done, and I beheld their work in a way that I have never before witnessed.

Those of us who were there representing *The Urantia Book* all shared a similar sense of heightened celestial guidance. We never had to worry about meeting each other for meals or plenary sessions. Our group would effortlessly end up sitting in the same row. At meals our group would share stories of our daily encounters, which even we found hard to believe at times.

We all felt divinely happy as we shared the good news of the Fifth Epochal Revelation with the world's religionists, who, for the most part, received it with an open heart.

The experience has changed me. I feel the peace and well being that comes with the wholehearted assurance that the Most Highs do "rule in the kingdoms of men." I, for one, am deeply

thankful to have had an opportunity to represent *The Urantia Book* at the Parliament.

The opening session of The Parliament of World's Religions was like a pageant. Each religion made a sincere offering to God and those assembled with songs, chants, prayers and dances. Some praised the Father, some praised the Mother and others the Spirit. The sincerity of the moment touched my heart and I wrote this prayer.

Parliamentary Prayer

*Oh Father,
Hear our song.
We raise our voice to you,
Help us find the light.*

*Oh Mother,
See our dance.
We move ourselves in you,
Help us through this night.*

*Oh Spirit,
Touch our hearts.
We fill our souls with you,
Help us make things right.*

*From around this lonesome globe we've come
With hopeful heart and willing hand.
We reach and touch the world with faith
For peace and love we make a stand.*

*No more to rage in vain disgrace
That "they can not be one with me!"
But ever let us keep apace
In joy of unity.*

*Oh Heavenly Hosts,
Embrace us now.
And lift the veil of dark despair,
Show us the wonder of your light
And the many sparkling colors there.*

Enjoying the Spectacle of the Parliament

By Byron Belitsos,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

The most thrilling moment of the Parliament of World's Religions, the grand convocation of this planet's spiritual traditions held in downtown Chicago last September, came at the close of the 90-minute opening procession. After the last of the representatives of each religious faith was seated, a joyous cheer suddenly arose.

The combined voices of hundreds of religionists from every continent resounded in the Palmer House Hotel ballroom. Cameras flashed and film rolled as the throng of attendees stood and applauded the achievement of uniting these many religions in one place, exactly 100 years after the original Parliament in 1893.

It was exhilarating to witness this momentous occasion as part of a team representing the Fifth Epochal Revelation, knowing that our book will one day provide the conceptual scaffolding for true religious unity.

It was at this event that I first felt free to share my belief in *The Urantia Book* in a public forum. No need to withhold here; the accepted protocol of interfaith conferences requires that one freely share the heart and soul of one's faith and beliefs -- at least such was the way at the great interfaith jubilee in Chicago.

The Fellowship was not listed as a sponsor of the Parliament; neither was a presentation on *The Urantia Book* to be found among the 500 or so lectures and workshops that were given by virtually every religion, sect or spiritual movement in the world, with the exception of fundamentalists.

It is my hope that we get more deeply involved in the interfaith movement, both for the gratifying experience of sharing deeply with other open-minded religionists and to become the salt that adds savor to the global movement for interfaith dialogue.

Continued from page 10

Family Happenings

Dr. Lawrence Schkade of Fort Worth, Texas is doing well after his heart transplant and has resumed hosting a study group.

Brent St. Denis of Elliot Lake, Ontario has been elected to a four-year term as a member of Parliament in the Ottawa government. He is a member of the Liberal Party and represents 73,000 people in the No. Algoma district of Ontario. Regretfully, due to a lack of time to continue his volunteer efforts, Brent has had to resign his post as secretary-general of the Fellowship to pursue his career in Canadian politics.

Duane and Lucile Faw escaped the fires that swept Malibu, California in October. Although their home and all their belongings were destroyed by the fire, they are well and plan to rebuild.

In Service

Alan Smith, a reader in Chiang Mai, Thailand and Timothy Decker have placed more than 100 *Urantia Books* throughout India and Southeast Asia.

Robin and Helene Jorgensen of New York City, who helped at *The Urantia Book* booth at New York's Whole Life Expo, report of their experience, "We can in truth say we actually had a bona fide blue book "Blue Light Special" rush on the booth. Credit cards were flying as were our spirits. Major seeds were sown."

On Study Groups

Ralph and Betty Zehr, who host the study group in Waverly, New York, encourage members to study the topic before each session. They are focusing on the life and teachings of Jesus and papers related to the upcoming 2,000th birthday celebration of Jesus. In their study group children sit at a nearby table where they can hear the discussion while doing artwork and other activities geared to their age.

The study group in Austin, Texas holds a special sequential reading of *The Urantia Book*, with newcomers and other seekers invited to read alongside long-time readers. Tim and Kitty Traylor

publish a newsletter with notes and maps to homes of the various families who host the study group.

A study group for teenagers has been started in Boulder, Colorado. The same is happening in Indianapolis.

A *Urantia Book*/Bible study group meets in Dallas. This type of study is also taking place in Rochester and Buffalo, New York.

Another new study group has started meeting at the home of Charlie Olivea in Watertown, Connecticut. Karen Andersen, Marty Greenhut, Art Gregory and Bill Rocap study in this group, which meets on the first and third Sunday of each month from 3 to 5 p.m. Meetings alternate between sequential reading and topical study.

Area Coordinators

The Fellowship has elected several new area coordinators. If you know readers of *The Urantia Book* who need assistance in those regions of the United States, please refer them to their new area coordinators. They are:

* **Eastern upstate New York** -- Alice Houghtaling, 1109 Millington Rd., Schenectady, NY 12309, (518) 374-9417.

* **Maryland** -- Vic McGonegal, 8013 Aladdin Dr., Laurel, MD 20723, (301) 490-4576.

* **North Idaho** -- Thomas Orjala, 1480 N. Ruby Rd., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814, (208) 667-4178.

* **Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Northeast Maryland** -- Ellen Walker, 27 Boren's Shore Lane, Elkton, MD 21921, (410) 398-0285.

1995 Summer Intensive

The Education Committee has prepared an agenda for next year's Summer Intensive program, tentatively to be held July 22-27 at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey. The theme for the six-day event is *Spiritual Communion -- Theory & Practice*.

"The university is convenient to the Newark airport and it's a place where there are a lot of readers," says Dan Massey, chairman of the committee.

As to why the program is not meeting at Lake Forest, Illinois, "we intend to move it to places where there can be local society participation," Massey says.

tance by faith on your part makes you a partaker of the divine nature, a son or a daughter of God. By faith you are eternally advanced in the way of progressive and divine perfection. By faith was Abraham justified and made aware of salvation by the teachings of Melchizedek. All down through the ages has this same faith saved the sons of men, but now has a Son come forth from the Father to make salvation more real and acceptable." (*Urantia Book*, pgs. 1682-1683)



Biblical References to Melchizedek

In the Bible Melchizedek is mentioned in Hebrews, Genesis and Psalms, but there are also minor references scattered throughout the text. Some of these do not refer to Melchizedek by name, but rather to the "High Priest," which scholars believe is attributed to Melchizedek. He is also called Zadok in many Davidic passages. 1 Kings 1:18 says Zadok belongs to David. 1 Chron. 5:11 says David called for Zadok.

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Classifieds

Editor's Note: For the consideration of a donation of \$20 to The Study Group Herald, up to one column inch of this section will be made available for your notice. Maximum size for notices is 2-1/2 inches. Submit all notices with your donations to The Study Group Herald, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614. Make your checks payable to the Fellowship.

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The Positive Qualities Chart is a colorful array of 984 positive qualities presented in nine concentric circles. Love is the primary central force with Truth, Goodness and Beauty the primary divisions. This chart, 22" x 22" with locator guide, is \$25, postage included. For smaller and personal display in buttons all in color, send \$1.50 for 1-3/4 inch size to Jim Downs, The Positive Qualities Co., 2888 Bluff Street, #428, Boulder, CO 80304 or call (800) 484-9668 x984.

The Urantia Book for sale plus extensive secondary works. For a free catalog, write The Good Cheer Press, P.O. Box 18764, Boulder, CO 80304 or call (800) 767-LOVE.

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Angels All Around Us coloring book for children and Mustard Seeds are other items from Good Cheer Press. Mustard Seeds make wonderful bookmarks to give to family and friends. Eighteen different selections contain many truths quoted from *The Urantia Book*.

The Concordex by Clyde Bedell, which helps in planning study group topics and research of *The Urantia Book*. On sale now at the Good Cheer Press. Call 1 (800) 767-LOVE.

The Paramony by Duane Faw, a single source for discussing comparisons between the Bible and *The Urantia Book*. Write Good Cheer Press, P.O. Box 18764, Boulder, CO 80308.

Friendship with God by Kaye and Bill Cooper, on how to feel God's presence and know Him as a friend. \$11.95 (includes shipping). Send check to Adventures in Spiritual Living Inc., P.O. Box 680857-H, Houston, TX 77268-0857.

Art Prints by Byron and Call of the Spirit by Merritt Horn, an inspirational book still in supply at Good Cheer Press. Call 1 (800) 767-5683 for quantity and prices.

Amazing Grace, a motion picture screenplay based on the life and teachings of Jesus according to *The Urantia Book*. Experienced script writer looking for executive producer. Write to Ken Mobley, 1075 Fourth Street, St. Mary's, GA 31558 or call (912) 673-6153 evenings and (912) 882-7699 days.

Two-color IC93 pins. Order from the Jesusonian Foundation at 1 (800) 767-5683.

IC93 Tee Shirts. For a donation of \$10 a limited supply of these shirts is available. Sizes L and XL in aqua, hot pink and heavy gold. Write the Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 or call (312) 327-0424.

Getting To Know God, a children's book by Kaye Cooper. A spiritual activity book for parents and children, ages 4 to 8 years. 8-1/2 x 11, 28 pages, \$5.95 includes shipping. Order from Adventures in Spiritual Living

Inc., Box 680867-H, Houston, TX 77268-0857.

Fellowship Study Guides (U.S. /International prices):

Artistic Conception of the Master Universe Study Groups of <i>The Urantia Book</i> :	
Ideas & Suggestions	\$2.50/\$3.50
Scientific Symposium I	\$5.00/\$6.00
Scientific Symposium II	\$5.00/\$6.00
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Singles Service. If you are single and would like to meet a person who reads *The Urantia Book*, send your photograph with a 75-word message about yourself. \$4 for one issue; \$8 for two issues of the Fifth Epochal Matchmaker. You take full responsibility for outcome. Write to RMSF, 5490 Spine Rd., Boulder, CO 80301 or call (303) 499-1970. Return calls are collect.

Spiritual Psychology, a primer by Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger. Call 1 (800) 767-5683.

The Life and Teachings of Jesus by Preston Thomas, a reference book for students of *The Urantia Book* and Bible. Contact Good Cheer Press at 1 (800) 767-5683.

The Urantia Literacy Project by the School of Meanings and Values. An overview series of the project serves as the core for the school teacher training program. For more information, write ULP, c/o School of Meanings and Values, 649 Copeland Court #3, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

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Ascending Currents

Prayers for the Community and the Love of God

Thank you, Father-Mother, for the gift of yourself to us through others.

We pray for love and tolerance that we may continue to grow in appreciation of

The beauty and goodness of this wonderful gift you have bestowed upon us:

The gift of our sisters and brothers.

Lead us into wisdom.

Guide us to truth and inspire us to love, that we may see more clearly

The closeness of Your presence in the faces of those around us.

As Your Son, our Creator-Father, lived a perfect life of service among us,

Help us to follow his example and love one another as he loved us.

We look forward with joyful anticipation to the fullness of the revelation of community,

When we will sometime experience it in your embrace on Paradise. Amen.

Jim Schelstrate

Loving Father, Tender Mother,
You have blessed me with joy,

A warm happiness so deep as to define serenity.

I pray to You not only in appreciation but in continual wonder,

Of a small and simple thought that is the foundation of my being:

You are always in me and I in You.

Matthew Klein

Dear God, we pray

That we may more faithfully cooperate with the spirit of Your indwelling.

That we may more cheerfully endure the tasks of Your emplacement.

That we may more faithfully carry out the program of Your selection.

That we may more persistently tread the paths of Your choosing.

That we may more humbly receive credit that may accrue as a result of your ceaseless endeavors.

Let us not ever forget Your divine affection and devotion for each and every one of us.

And may we avail ourselves of Your divine power and wisdom until the very end, until the last earth struggle is over.

*Adapted from an Adjuster's admonition
(pg. 1213-14)*

The poetry of my soul is drawn from the well of human-divinity

Deep within this cavern of flesh flows the true river of refreshment

Life-giving wine
Divine drinking in
Thinking in thoughts

Well water, well water
Water me well with Your divine wine

spirits of sages
wisdom of the ages
fountain of youth
fountain of truth

Building block, I am carved from the rock of human-divinity

And the river within flows forth with words and wishes like loaves and fishes

For Jesus lives inside of me with the Father fragment guide I see my soul of human-divinity

Watered well with words to tell of that which dwells within my soul

The spirit and mind are intertwined and God is the treasure at the heart
of the whole creation
the foundation
the source

From which spring the waters of wonderful words that sing like birds

Winging through the air and angels bringing answers to my prayer

His most precious love is everywhere

K. Brendi Poppel

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