



The Fellowship Herald

Vol. 11 Summer 2010
A Publication of *The Urantia Book Fellowship*

Summer Study Session 2010

God Consciousness & Cosmic Morality

When: Friday, July 23–Sunday, July 25, 2010

Registration Thursday, July 22

Where: Techny Towers Retreat Center, 2001 Waukegan Rd., Northbrook, IL

Why: So many things to enjoy:

Great speakers

Intriguing workshops

Variety of worship services

NEW Entire children's program including child care

Wonderful chance to socialize with other readers

Very comfortable accommodations

Beautiful and restful campus

And much, much more!



Bring the family and join us for a great weekend!

For registration or information on follow-up studies,
contact the Education Committee at www.urantia-education.org

~ Contents ~

- 2 The World Is NOT Coming to An End**
Carolyn Kendall & Barbara Newsom
- 8 Religion of Experience vs. Religion of Authority**
Richard S. Omura
- 10 God Consciousness**
Charles Laurence Olivea
- 12 How Well Do You Know the Apostles?**
- 13 *The Urantia Book*, Human Concepts and Revelatory Validation**
David Elders
- 15 Understanding the Relation of Love to the Mind**
Sheila Keene-Lund
- 18 Cosmic Socialization and Planetary Citizenship**
Dave Holt
- 23 Testimonial of One Second-Generation Urantian**
Angela Thurston
- 26 Introducing *The Urantia Book* Historical Society**
- 27 The Problem of Business**
Dan Amyx
- 30 Crouching Deity/Hidden Supreme**
Bob Debold

THE URANTIA BOOK
FELLOWSHIP
Cultivating The Spirit of Religion



Publications Committee Chair: Linda Buselli, Editor, Summer 2010 Issue: Linda Buselli. Members: Cece Forrester, David Glass, Nancy Johnson, Sage Waitts • Design & Layout: Sage Waitts • Banner Design: Courtesy of Nick Curto and Colleen • Published annually by Uversa Press, a subsidiary of *The Urantia Book* Fellowship, P.O. Box 4583, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 USA. Tel: 877.288.3772 Fax: 847.251.2490 Email: fellowship@urantiabook.org www.urantiabook.org Unless otherwise noted quotations are from *The Urantia Book*. References are given as follows: Brackets [] indicate paper, section, and paragraph. Parentheses give page number of single column edition.

Please note that the views expressed in this publication represent the opinions of their authors and not necessarily those of The Urantia Book Fellowship or the editors of The Fellowship Herald.

THE WORLD IS NOT COMING TO AN END, AKA LEADERSHIP AND THE REVELATORS' PLANS

Presented by Carolyn Kendall and Barbara Newsom,
April 11, 2010, Schaumburg, Illinois

INTRODUCTION: IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION, in the past few years there has been a burgeoning trend in movies, television series, and other fiction, whose plots center around the impending end of our world. According to the conventional scripts, or worst-case scenarios reported by the news media hype, the end will be initiated by either catastrophic natural events, man-made environmental destruction, or by weapons of mass destruction. In the fictional portrayals, earth is overtaken by grotesque creatures or aliens from outer space. Almost none of the fictional catastrophes portray a benign visitation; all are violent, and mankind comes to a cruel end. Possibly they reflect “*the garbled dream life*” of script writers. [44:4.4] (P. 503)

Shows about archeological exploration allege to uncover evidence on the walls of ancient temples that predict the end of the world. They often include the arrival, or return, of a God-like being who presides over a dying civilization.

Adding to these concerns are proponents of End Time interpretations of the Book of Revelation in the Bible. The second coming of Jesus Christ is linked with the Rapture, the taking up into heaven the literal bodies of the Saved. True believers will be swept up as the time of trouble and tribulation approaches, they believe. The Apocalypse is believed to be close at hand, citing the increasing number of wars, weather disturbances, epidemics and the moral degeneracy of mankind. They preach that God's judgment against sin, corruption and conflict can't be far off. Although many interpret the Book of Revelation more positively, especially as the promise of future revelation and establishment of “heaven on earth,” the sensational End Time predictions seem to receive more public attention.

In contrast to these fearful forecasts, the Urantia Revelation promises that the world *does* have a future! It is our contention that the book projects in considerable detail an increasingly spiritualized planet. Not only will Urantia continue to circle the sun, it is evolving toward an inspiring and radiant future:

Urantia is now quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment. [194:9.2] (P. 2082)

IN ORDER FOR ALL OF US, especially leaders, to plan effectively for

the future, it would be useful if we reviewed some basic information about *The Urantia Book*, how it fits into the plans of the celestial beings who watch over our world, and how we should be conducting our affairs in the immediate years ahead:

1. **What is *The Urantia Book*?** *The Urantia Book* is an “epochal revelation,” the fifth in a series of divine revelations that have occurred at increasingly frequent intervals for the past 500,000 years. Unlike the first four revelations, *The Urantia Book* was not accompanied by *visible* celestial personalities who bestowed themselves in human or human-like form. Neither did it coincide with the termination of a planetary dispensation and the beginning of a new epochal age, unlike three of the previous revelations. This revelation is a unique phenomenon in the local universe: it is in written form. The book is probably not a finished revelation—an end in itself; but rather a precursor—the first stage of an on-going revelatory process that will continue to unfold in future years. You can decide for yourselves whether our planet is doomed to oblivion as portrayed in today's media, or whether it has the wonderful and enthralling future that we believe is the plan of a loving and merciful Creator, God the Father.

2. **This epochal revelation was authorized** by the highest beings of the local and superuniverse. The book is the joint effort of a vast range of authors, from Paradise-origin beings down to midwayers native to our world. This superhuman authorship was directed by a *Revelatory Commission* comprised of the following groups of universe personalities:

Part I: The Central and Supervuniverses, was authorized by the Ancients of Days of Uversa. These papers were formulated by a high commission of twenty-four Orvonton administrators.

Part II: The Local Universe, and Part III, The History of Urantia, were authorized by Gabriel of Salvington, directed by Mantutia Melchizedek, and sponsored by a Nebadon Corps of twelve local universe personalities.

Part IV: The Life of Jesus, was supervised by Gabriel, directed by Mantutia Melchizedek, and sponsored by twelve Urantia midwayers.

3. **How Was Its Arrival Facilitated?** The celestial personalities identified above created the text of *The Urantia Book*, which was communicated to a *human Contact Commission* through

an unnamed *human Contact Personality*, all members of the Reserve Corps of Destiny. The Contact Commission facilitated the reception of the revelation beginning in 1925, when, after some eighteen years of contact, the Revelatory Commission asked them to invite a larger group of humans known as the *Forum* to ask questions. Only the Contact Commissioners maintained direct contact with the Revelatory Commission. The Forum members generated questions which the Contact Commissioners submitted to the Revelatory Commission. The papers in the first series (1925 to 1929) numbered fifty-seven, and were received in response to the Forum members' questions. The Revelatory Commission then expanded the papers in response to further questions from the Forum to create a series of 196 papers. The final refining and polishing of the 196 papers continued until 1942, eventually published by Urantia Foundation in 1955 as *The Urantia Book*.

4. Planetary Dispensations: Why now in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries? Our current epoch on Urantia began the day Jesus arose from the tomb, and is known variously as: the Post-Bestowal Son Age, the Christian dispensation, and as the dispensation of the Spirit of Truth. The end of the first dispensation occurred at the arrival of the Planetary Prince 500,000 years ago, when all who had died since the time of Andon and Fonta, and had not previously gone on to the mansion worlds, were resurrected. Our world has been isolated from the cross-currents of universe communication for the past 200,000 years because our Planetary Prince Caligastia participated in the Lucifer rebellion against the Universal Father on Paradise and against the rule of the creator of our local universe, Michael of Nebadon.

The second dispensational resurrection occurred during the time of Adam [76:6.2] (P. 830), [189:3.3] (P. 2024) The purpose of the Adamic mission was to improve the quality of the human stocks, to upstep the intellectual capacity of mankind and to accelerate spiritual progress. Our Adam and Eve arrived almost 38,000 years ago, but unfortunately, after only one hundred years, they defaulted their trust, and the mission ended in failure. From a material standpoint, this was a catastrophic loss.

Here is where Urantia departed from the usual schedule. Machiventa Melchizedek bestowed himself at Salem 1,973 years before the birth of Christ Michael, our bestowal Son. Ordinarily, Paradise Avonal Sons begin coming to planets on magisterial missions one or more times after the arrival of the Material Son and Daughter—Adam and Eve—and prior to the bestowal Son's arrival. Machiventa Melchizedek came instead on an emergency mission which was intended to re-introduce the teaching about

the one God in preparation for the arrival of Christ Michael. No dispensational resurrection occurred at the time of Melchizedek. The third and most recent dispensational resurrection occurred on the day of Jesus' resurrection.

And now, 2,000 years after the bestowal of Michael, and 200,000 years after the Lucifer Rebellion, there are subtle indications that the case against the perpetrators is moving toward adjudication, and that our isolation may be coming to an end in the not too distant future. *The Urantia Book* reveals the following intriguing details:

- **The first hearing in the case of Gabriel vs. Lucifer** occurred on Uversa, the capitol of the superuniverse, "*during the time of effecting this revelation.*" [54:4.8] (P. 616) Why is this significant? We are told that immediately after Lucifer and his associates are annihilated, the *circuits of communication* between our world and the headquarters worlds of the system, constellation, and local universe will be reinstated. Worlds not in isolation ordinarily receive broadcasts of events transpiring in the universe. "*That which mercy cannot rehabilitate justice will eventually annihilate.*" [21:5.4] (P. 241)

- **Satan, who was complicit with Lucifer**, was detained "*during the presentation of these papers.*" [53:9.4] (P. 611) & [54:4.8] (P. 616)

- An archangel circuit began to operate at the time of Jesus' resurrection, but an **archangel divisional headquarters** was established on Urantia "*in more recent times.*" [37:3.3] (P. 408) This archangel circuit is not accessible to humans and is not to be confused with the circuits mentioned above. Of possible interest in our study, archangels wrote eleven papers of *The Urantia Book*. "*The roll call of a dispensation termination is promulgated by an attendant archangel.*" [37:3.6] (P. 409) Archangels are also the advance guard and right-hand associates of Paradise Avonal Sons during magisterial missions to the inhabited planets of time. Think about this enigmatic passage:

Do you grasp the significance of the fact that your lowly and confused planet has become a divisional headquarters for the universe administration and direction of certain archangel activities having to do with the Paradise ascension scheme? This undoubtedly presages the future concentration of other ascendant activities on the bestowal world of Michael and lends a tremendous and solemn import to the Master's personal promise, "I will come again". [37:3.4] (P. 409)

This hint: "**concentration of other ascendant activities**"

The planet upon which the Creator Son completed his bestowal career will be an important field trip for a new class of morontia beings.

would not only refer to the mass resurrection of our own sleeping survivors of the current dispensation, but it may also be a subtle way of telling us **that survivors from other isolated worlds will be brought to our world to be trained** after their resurrection on the mansion worlds. If this is true, it could be planned to happen in conjunction with Michael's promise to return. If that seems like wild speculation, recall that after Jesus was resurrected, the surviving morontia mortals and their associated directors from the seven mansion worlds were brought to Urantia to go through the morontia experience with the risen Jesus here on earth. [191:3](P. 2040–41) The planet upon which the Creator Son completed his bestowal career will be an important field trip for a new class of morontia beings. Archangels are “*dedicated to the work of creature survival and to the furtherance of the ascending*

needs of his realms. A Master Son may at will vary the order of the spiritual adjudication and evolutionary adjustment of the inhabited planets. And such Sons do make and carry out the plans of their own choosing in all matters of special planetary needs, in particular regarding the worlds of their creature sojourn and still more concerning the realm of terminal bestowal, the planet of incarnation in the likeness of mortal flesh. [21:5.9] (P. 241)

- “...all the worlds of Satania have rested under the spiritual ban of [the constellation of] Norlatiadek in consequence of the Lucifer rebellion” [50:6.5] (P. 578), and the control of the Constellation Fathers—the “Most Highs” who “rule in the kingdoms of men.”—in consequence of the Lucifer rebellion [43:3] (PP. 488–89) We don't know much about how the

The Urantia Book is an experiment on an experimental planet.

career of the mortals of time and space.” [37:3.2] (P. 408) Michael cannot bestow himself a second time in human form, but he could be manifested in some other manner. Add his not-so-veiled promise to return to the mix:

[W]hen this gospel of the kingdom shall have been proclaimed to all the world for the salvation of all peoples, and when the fullness of the age has come to pass, the Father will send you another dispensational bestowal, or else the Son of Man will return to adjudge the age... [176:2.5] (P. 1915)

- “**Urantia is a decimal planet, a life-experiment world.** On one world in each ten a greater variance in the standard life designs is permitted than on the other (non-experimental) worlds.” [36:2.8] (P. 398) The supervisor of Nebadon's decimal planets is Tabamantia, who visited our world on a periodic inspection 38,000 years ago. Within one hundred years of that visit, Adam and Eve arrived. We know from subsequent information that his latest visit occurred just a few months before the first papers of *The Urantia Book* were transmitted. *The Urantia Book* is an experiment on an experimental planet. Might we look forward to the arrival of a divine visitor within one hundred years of Tabamantia's last inspection?

- In addition to our status as an experimental planet, we also have working in our favor the Master Son Michael's special consideration for Urantia:

After his elevation to settled sovereignty in a local universe a Paradise Michael is in full control of all other Sons of God functioning in his domain, and he may freely rule in accordance with his concept of the

other isolated worlds are faring. It is generally not permitted for the revelators to relate “*details of the life and environment of your Satania neighbors.*” They “*are limited by the planetary quarantine and by the system isolation.*” [50:6.1] (P. 578) They do tell us that Urantia “*has not differed so greatly*” from the other isolated worlds; but compared with the loyal worlds, we seem “*confused and greatly retarded in all phases of intellectual progress and spiritual attainment.*”... “*[C]ulture cannot be enhanced unless mind is elevated.*”... “*Much depends, also, upon the successive missions of the divine Sons and upon the extent to which enlightenment is received by the ages of their respective dispensations.*” [50:6] (P. 578)

In Paper 72, “**Government on a Neighboring Planet**”, one of our Satania neighbors has a history most like our own—the Planetary Prince joined in rebellion and the Material Son defaulted. One continental nation on that world has achieved a superior civilization, though eleven neighboring continents are inferior. “[I]f a Magisterial Son should soon come to [the most] advanced nation, great things could quickly happen on this world.” [72:12.2] (P. 820) The inference that an Avonal Son would come to a world where only one nation or continent has risen to a requisite level of civilization is both intriguing and reassuring. Apparently, an entire world is not required to reach readiness for revelation as the criteria for a super-mortal visitation.

Also intriguing is the role of the Four and Twenty Counselors, not only in the future of Urantia, but also in the future of “*the thirty-six other rebellion-isolated worlds of Satania,*” whose advisory boards are subordinate to the

“Urantia advisory council.” This supervisory board of former Urantians serves as Christ Michael’s “personal agents” on Jerusalem, makes visits to the individual planets, and executes “the special requests of Gabriel and the unusual mandates of Michael.” [45:4] (PP. 513–14) & [114:2] (PP. 1251–52)

- Pairs of **Brilliant Evening Stars**, the superangels of the local universe, “frequently go on special missions to the individual planets as [Gabriel’s] personal representatives.” Gabriel was the director of Parts II, III, and IV of *The Urantia Book*, and Evening Stars authored eight papers in the book. Also, “one of the high duties of the Evening Stars is to accompany Avonal **bestowal** Sons on their planetary missions,” [37:2.3 & 8] (P. 407) They aren’t mentioned as accompanying Avonals on **magisterial** missions, yet they participated in writing *The Urantia Book*.

- Another perplexing passage: “[O]nly a **bestowal Son** can re-establish interplanetary lines of communication on such a spiritually isolated world.” [35:9.9] (P. 394) We’ve already had our one allotted bestowal Son. Since only a “bestowal Son” can re-open the circuits, and a Magisterial Son cannot come on a “bestowal mission” then who will re-establish the circuits? They tease us with this: “ordinarily only once will a bestowal Son serve on the sphere.” [20:5.4] (P. 228) So, which Son will end our isolation? Will a Magisterial Son be sent on **another bestowal mission** to terminate the dispensation and reestablish the circuits when the Lucifer Rebellion is settled? Or will our bestowal Son Michael return specifically to “re-establish interplanetary lines of communication?” Michael has promised to return. Did he know when he was here that he would likely be the one to turn the radio back on?

Now and then in the transaction of the affairs of a local creation it becomes wise to withhold certain details, temporarily, from the knowledge of practically all of the native personalities of that local universe. Certain advanced plans and complex rulings are also better grasped and more fully understood by the more mature and farseeing corps of Most High Assistants... [e.g., who just happen to be the listed authors of Part I] [37:4.5] (P. 410)

5. The next visitation. Urantia “is a full dispensation and more behind the average planetary schedule.” [52:3.6] (P. 593) And yet, an Avonal Son on a magisterial mission could theoretically be assigned even *before* the circuits are re-established; Christ Michael, Machiventa Melchizedek, and Adam and Eve all came to Urantia in its isolated state.

Magisterial Sons are the high magistrates of the realms, the adjudicators of the successive dispensations They preside over the awakening of the sleeping survivors ... [and] reassign the

space creatures of planetary ministry to the tasks of the new dispensation, ... His presence constitutes a judgment of the realm.” [20:3.1&4] (P. 226) All worlds receive many visits from Magisterial Sons. “When Paradise Avonals come on magisterial missions, at least the initial one, they are always incarnated” [52:4.4] (P. 594) appearing “as an adult of the realm by a technique not involving mortal birth” [20:2.6] (P. 225) and are in “physical contact with the mortal creatures of his day and generation.” [20:4.1] (P. 226) They do not experience birth or death. “They may live on for generations in those cases where they remain as rulers on certain planets.” [52:4.3] (P. 594) “On the second and subsequent missions the Magisterial Sons may or may not be incarnated—the advent of each one marks the end of one dispensation and the beginning of another.” [52:4.9] (P. 595) “These [combined] dispensations ... cover anywhere from twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand years of Urantia time. Sometimes such an epoch is much shorter and in rare instances even longer.” [52:4.10] (P. 595) Melchizedeks “support the Paradise Avonals on magisterial missions to the inhabited worlds, and... are visible to mortal eyes if the Avonal Son is also thus manifest.” [35:2.6] (P. 386) As with the Creator Son, magisterial Sons do not beget offspring. “Avonals may repeatedly serve on the same planet both before and after the appearance of the bestowal Son.” [20:2.6] (P. 225)

They “are planetary ministers and judges... [to] all races...” [20:2.1] (P. 225) “As teachers [they] are exclusively devoted to the spiritual enlightenment of the mortal races... [20:6.4] (P. 229) “In love and devotion, with tender mercy and affectionate consideration, these Magisterial Sons bestow themselves upon the worlds of space... In all their work on the worlds of the local universe the Magisterial Sons are just as divinely effective and all wise as... their Paradise brother, the Creator Son.” [20:5.6] (P. 228)

“The postbestowal Son age may extend from ten thousand to a hundred thousand years” [52:5.8] (P. 596) after which the Trinity Teacher Sons are dispatched to the planet for one thousand years to initiate the spiritual age of light and life. On each mission these Paradise Daynal Sons are accompanied by a magisterial Son who terminates the dispensation and initiates the new dispensation. “Eras of the Magisterial Sons and Teacher Sons and the ages of light and life are to be anticipated on Urantia, regardless of unexpected visitations of divine sons which may or may not occur.” [45:4.21] (P. 514)

6. The Revelators’ Guidance. A few years before the book was published, the human contact commissioners were apprised of developments that occurred after the text was complete. The book had been typeset, when the human partners learned about changes in the superhuman oversight of our world:

- **A regent of the acting Planetary Prince** was appointed to serve on Urantia and to oversee the early publication and

dissemination of *The Urantia Book*. He is of the Melchizedek order of local universe Sonship. The dictionary definition of regent is “one who exercises authority in the absence of a sovereign.” (“When a Melchizedek goes to a remote world in the name of Gabriel, he...appear[s] with the full authority of the Bright and Morning Star.”) [37:2.5] (P. 386)] In addition to his many rulings concerning publication of the book, and its associated organizations, was confirmation of this earlier notice:

a. “For five hundred years, from February 11, 1935, the overall welfare and direction of *The Urantia Book* is placed in the hands of the Seraphim of Progress.”

b. “The immediate fostering of the Urantia revelation—from decade to decade—at least for the next one hundred years) will be entrusted to the Seraphim of the Churches. I have instructed this group to create a special commission to carry on this work.”

The importance of this seraphic management cannot be overstated. They are two of among twelve groups of the order of Master Seraphim, all graduates of Seraphington, who are the resident managers of our planetary government and oversee vital aspects of human civilization on Urantia. Associated with them are members of the human Reserve Corps of Destiny. The chief of the Master Seraphic Corps is a primary supernaphim who wrote five papers of *The Urantia Book*. Our Associate Chief of Seraphim, Manotia, is a supreme seraphim of Nebadon, replete in local universe seraphic attainment. The “loyal seraphic commander” on Jerusem at the outbreak of the rebellion. Manotia has served on Urantia since the

Our eternal lives will be played out on the architectural worlds of space, but our immediate planetary futures are linked with orders of beings who are managing our world behind the scenes.

early days of the rebellion, having been assigned here when Lanaforge was installed as System Sovereign. [53:6.1–3] (P. 606)

• **Introduction to the Publication Mandate.** When they gave the Contact Commissioners permission to publish *The Urantia Book*, the Revelatory Commission provided an overview of the mission. Expectations as to what their human associates should strive to accomplish before the time of the

world-wide acceptance of the Urantia teachings were clarified. The following was read to the Forum and to later-arriving leaders:

“We regard *The Urantia Book* as a feature of the progressive evolution of human society. It is not germane to the spectacular episodes of epochal revolution, even though it may apparently be timed to appear in the wake of one such revolution in human society. The book belongs to the era immediately to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. When the chaos of the present confusion has passed, it will be more readily possible to formulate the cosmos of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs on earth that the Book has been made ready.

“But the publication of the book has not been postponed to that (possibly) somewhat remote date. An early publication of the book has been provided so that it may be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers. Its presence is also required to engage the attention of persons of means who may be thus led to provide funds for translations into other languages...

“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 world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness 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.”

The meaning of the phrase, “the conclusion of the present ideological struggle” has been a matter of conjecture among *Urantia Book* students. It has been variously construed to mean Fascism, Communism, terrorism, or even the Lucifer Rebellion. Others see it as an indictment of an overall lack of moral and spiritual development due to isolation.

• **The Emergency Corps of Mortal Selectmen.** In her presidential address to the First Triennial Delegate Assembly in 1967, a Contact Commissioner ended her speech with an excerpt from revelator instructions:

“I have heretofore reminded you that the celestial supervisors of Urantia are mobilizing small groups of

spirit-led men and women throughout the world—among all nations—and these truth battalions, these selectmen, are concerned today with scores of vital enterprises which have to do with the rehabilitation of the world following the ending of the present distressing conflicts.”

“And of all the emergency corps of mortal selectmen on Urantia, none is charged with a more solemn obligation than our group. We have been called to the great work of taking the first step of offering to mortal man a new light, a new revelation, of the love of God. The easy jog-trot religion of former days no longer suffices to meet the challenges of today. Following Jesus’ way of life calls for an act of complete commitment, a dedicated intention, a resolute purpose, a trumpet call to a life that will not compromise.”

7. Goals and Mission. The revelators emphasize the circumstances at the time Jesus was born that determined the readiness of humanity for the fourth epochal revelation:

Jesus did not come to this world during an age of spiritual decadence; at the time of his birth Urantia was experiencing such a revival of spiritual thinking and religious living as it had not known in all its previous post-Adamic history nor has experienced in any era since. When Michael incarnated on Urantia, the world presented the most favorable condition for the Creator Son’s bestowal that had ever previously prevailed or has since obtained. [121.1.1] (P. 1332)

If we are correct in our assumption that *The Urantia Book* is the first phase of a two-stage epochal revelation, then our mission is to prepare for happenings far different than the dark predictions of our media and literature. We must be ready for the advent of a Magisterial Son and the possibility of a return visit by Michael. Although we are advised not to attach Michael’s return to any particular era, as he or others could come at any time, they WILL come; of that there can be no doubt!

We were directed to “train leaders and teachers” and to “establish thousands of study groups” so that millions of humans can assimilate these teachings, the better to anticipate those visitations, the coming of a new dispensation and the reinstatement of intra-universe communication. As the book circulates throughout the world, more translations will be required. Thus will we be ready when the next “demonstrate[or] of righteousness” arrives, [176:2.3] (P.1914) accompanied by visible Melchizedek teachers who will confirm the lessons of *The Urantia Book*.

The revelators provided an unusual amount of factual information about levels of the universe and the beings who inhabit them. They have pulled out all the stops and given us more insight than even planets at the Trinity Teacher Son level receive. Among *Urantia Book* readers, however, there appears to be a lesser

amount of interest in Parts I and II than in Parts III and IV. The latter is where the major concentration has been in study groups. Nevertheless, the material in Parts I and II is where our future is foretold. Our eternal lives will be played out on the architectural worlds of space, but our immediate planetary futures are linked with orders of beings who are managing our world behind the scenes. The purpose of *The Urantia Book* is to:

...endeavor to expand cosmic consciousness and enhance spiritual perception” [F:0.1] (P.1) The quickest way to realize the brotherhood of man on Urantia is to effect the spiritual transformation of present-day humanity. The only technique for accelerating the natural trend of social evolution is that of applying spiritual pressure from above... [52:6.7](P. 598) Religious revelation is essential to the realization of brotherhood on Urantia. [52:6.2] (P. 597)

Many of our fellow humans are seeking for something beyond themselves to enrich their lives, or for a new way to approach the heavenly Father, but they don’t know how. They are all endowed with a Thought Adjuster and the Spirit of Truth which will open them up to possibilities of intellectual and spiritual expansion. Later on the day that Jesus departed from Urantia, the “gift of the Spirit [of Truth] did not come only to the apostles. The one hundred and twenty men and women assembled in the upper chamber all received the new teacher, as did all the honest of heart throughout the whole world.” [194:3.6] (P. 2063) “The coming of the Spirit of Truth...signifies that the Jesus of history has become the divine Son of living experience. The joy of this outpoured spirit, when it is consciously experienced in human life, is a tonic for health, a stimulus for mind, and an unfailing energy for the soul.” [194:3.18] (P. 2065)

What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions! [196:1.2] (P. 2090)

● Carolyn Kendall has been a reader of *The Urantia Book* since before publication; and along with her parents, brother, and late husband, was a founding member of the First *Urantia Society of Chicago*. She and her husband Tom served in leadership roles in the *Urantia Brotherhood/Fellowship and Urantia Foundation*, and she is the mother of five and grandmother of seven. Carolyn has lived in the same house on the street “Salvington Place” for forty-eight years.

● Barbara Newsom started reading *The Urantia Book* with her parents in a study group near Wichita, Kansas, in 1965, and has attended study groups ever since. In 1975, she moved to Chicago and joined First *Urantia Society*. Barbara has served on the Fellowship General Council, Executive Committee, and three standing committees. She also volunteers for *Urantia Foundation, Urantia Association International, and The Urantia Book Historical Society*,

RELIGION OF EXPERIENCE VS. RELIGION OF AUTHORITY

By Richard S. Omura, Los Angeles, CA

In the “Discourse on Religion” Joshua ben Joseph (Jesus) talks to his apostles on the religion of authority versus the religion of spiritual experience. He names the traditional faiths as religions of authority, based on intellectual assent.

At Jerusalem the religious leaders have formulated the various doctrines of their traditional teachers and the prophets of other days into an established system of intellectual beliefs, a religion of authority. The appeal of all such religions is largely to the mind.

He continues by talking about the religion of experience:

And now are we about to enter upon a deadly conflict with such a religion since we will so shortly begin the bold proclamation of a new religion—a religion which is not a religion in the present-day meaning of that word, a religion that makes its chief appeal to the divine spirit of my Father which resides in the mind of man; a religion which shall derive its authority from the fruits of its acceptance that will so certainly appear in the personal experience of all who really and truly become believers in the truths of this higher spiritual communion. [155.5.12] (PP. 1729–30)

The above was given to us about two thousand years ago. Have we learned from this teaching?

It is my observation that many have not. I have been to many study groups, conferences, and other *Urantia Book* gatherings and I am dismayed that *The Urantia Book* is being turned into another religion of authority. In study groups, many readers take the text of the book as if it were scripture, and give it intellectual assent before getting the spiritual experience to truly understand it. Heated arguments in which the readers vociferously debate text of relatively little spiritual value are a good example. They are much like the theologians in the medieval days that used to argue about how many angels could fit on the head of a pin. The behavior pattern and baggage from being in traditional religions of authority are often carried over as they replace their scripture with *The Urantia Book*.

Religions of authority do not have to be old or traditional. A relatively new work such as *The Urantia Book* can be the foundation of a religion of authority just as much as any traditional scripture. And because humans have a propensity for taking the easy way out, it seems we are allowing this to happen.

Until the human race progresses to the level of a higher and more general recognition of the realities of spiritual experience, large numbers of men and women will continue to show a

personal preference for those religions of authority which require only intellectual assent, in contrast to the religion of the spirit, which entails active participation of mind and soul in the faith adventure of grappling with the rigorous realities of progressive human experience. [155.5.8] (P. 1729)

While there are many *Urantia Book* readers who do not take the book as a religion of authority, there seem to be many more who do. I have talked with many, some even long-time readers, who claim that their religion is *The Urantia Book*. If this trend is not curtailed, the book will end up as another religion of authority, as Jesus’ teachings have become in the guise of Christianity.

The Urantia Book, as well as Jesus, talks of true religion as being a personal relationship with God, a living spiritual experience, rather than something written about in text.

True religion is an insight into reality, the faith-child of the moral consciousness, and not a mere intellectual assent to any body of dogmatic doctrines. True religion consists in the experience that “the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” Religion consists not in theologic propositions but in spiritual insight and the sublimity of the soul’s trust. [101:2.11] (P. 1107) {Bold print is mine.}

When we have such a true relationship with the Father, this becomes a new religion that is on a level far and above the religions of authority such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism or any of the major denominations in the world today. As Jesus said, “*a new religion—a religion which is not a religion in the present-day meaning of that word, a religion that makes its chief appeal to the divine spirit of my Father which resides in the mind of man.*” [155:5.12] (P. 1730) This still holds true even after all these years. It was new back then, and it still is, because humans have not taken heed; the world has not embraced this new religion.

This is a very important point. This new religion is the point of *The Urantia Book*. But the revelators do not advise us to start a new Urantian denomination. Rather, the new religion has no name, no scripture, and no organization apart from the family of God. It is a real and personal relationship with God that transcends denominations. And just as we don’t have an institutional name for our personal relationship with our own biologic father, we don’t need a name for our relationship with God. It is a reality. It simply is. Putting a label on it detracts from its transcendent reality.

The Urantia Book is not a religious denomination. *The Urantia Book* is the name of a book. Urantia is the name of our planet, Earth. Urantians are the inhabitants of Urantia. Let’s keep it that way.

THE BOOK AND CHRISTIANITY

There has been talk by those with a strong foundation in Christianity to piggyback the teachings of *The Urantia Book* into existing Christian denominations, and to use their infrastructure to further the teachings of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. This would be a backward step, a devolution of not only the teachings in the book, but also of Jesus' teachings. (not to mention that it would be a step in the direction of making the Urantia movement another Christian sect). The religion of spiritual experience that *The Urantia Book* espouses transcends existing religions to such a large degree that asking traditional religions of authority to help disseminate *The Urantia Book* teachings would be like asking a primitive witch doctor to assist in modern brain surgery. Scary thought.

DISSEMINATING PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

There is an ongoing effort to disseminate *The Urantia Book*. Much of this is geared toward selling or giving away the book. Do these efforts lead toward propagating another religion of authority or one of personal spiritual experience? How much effort is aimed at disseminating the religion of personal spiritual experience, which the book recommends?

When we go about our efforts to disseminate the book, let us be mindful that we are not spreading another religion of authority but rather one of experience. Let us spread the word that true religion can be had without books, scripture, institutions, and ecclesiastical authority, that we have the inner power to personally commune with the Creator of the Universe. And let us be able to affirm this to others based on our own experiences, rather than on something we read.

To disseminate the religion of experience is much harder than distributing text.

Joshua ben Joseph: "Are you fearful, soft, and ease-seeking? Are you afraid to trust your future in the hands of the God of truth, whose sons you are? Are you distrustful of the Father, whose children you are? Will you go back to the easy path of the certainty and intellectual settledness of the religion of traditional authority, or will you gird yourselves to go forward with me into that uncertain and troublous future of proclaiming the new truths of the religion of the spirit, the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men?" [155:5.13] (P. 1730)

The Urantia Book is not the unadulterated and infallible word of God that many take it to be. There are many spiritual truths in it, but we must confirm them with our own spiritual experiences. And it is these personal experiences with God that constitute true religion, not the text of a book. Any effort to disseminate this new religion, the religion of spiritual experience, should be by our personal interaction with the souls of others—through personal service and ministry rather than by merely handing out books, which could lead to a religion of authority. There are many religionists in the world who are disseminating this new religion of experience, all without

the benefit of the big blue book; can *Urantia Book* readers do any less? We must be careful in not turning *The Urantia Book* into another religion of authority, as it seems to be slowly becoming.

Joshua ben Joseph: "I admonish you to give up the practice of always quoting the prophets of old and praising the heroes of Israel, and instead aspire to become living prophets of the Most High and spiritual heroes of the coming kingdom. To honor the God-knowing leaders of the past may indeed be worth while, but why, in so doing, should you sacrifice the supreme experience of human existence: finding God for yourselves and knowing him in your own souls?" [155:6.7] (PP. 1731–32) (Bold prints are mine.)

The above paragraph can be made current by replacing "prophets of old" with "*The Urantia Book*," and "Israel" with "Urantia." However, in heeding this advice, I realized that I, myself, used quotes from the book. I hesitated to do so at first, thinking I should write this essay entirely using my own words, but as the current atmosphere in the Urantia movement is toward heeding the authority of the book, I included the quotes. Having said that, please make note that the content of this essay is based on my own personal experiences with God, affirmed and confirmed by *The Urantia Book*, and other secondary sources of information. The time will come when words of truth based solely on personal spiritual experience will be heeded as much or more than the words of religious authority. Until that time, insights gleaned from personal experience may have to be supported by works of authority, but not supplanted, for we should take care that the words of authority not be the sole basis for our religious convictions.

However, the reality is that many will take *The Urantia Book* as scripture, as a religion of authority. Maybe that cannot be helped, but those of us who know better should try to point the way so that more people will have a spiritual experience personally with God.

Joshua: "Now, mistake not, my Father will ever respond to the faintest flicker of faith. He takes note of the physical and superstitious emotions of the primitive man. And with those honest but fearful souls whose faith is so weak that it amounts to little more than an intellectual conformity to a passive attitude of assent to religions of authority, the Father is ever alert to honor and foster even all such feeble attempts to reach out for him. But you who have been called out of darkness into the light are expected to believe with a whole heart; your faith shall dominate the combined attitudes of body, mind, and spirit." [155:6.17] (P. 1733)

Richard Omura has studied *The Urantia Book* for over thirty years. He has served as President of the Los Angeles society and as a General Councilor of the Fellowship. His latest work, *The Whole Universe Book*, is now available from Amazon or from the book's website at: www.TheWholeUniverseBook.com.

GOD CONSCIOUSNESS

By Charles Laurence Olivea, Santa Fe, NM

The following article was presented as the plenary speech at the Summer Study Session, at Dominican University, River Forest, IL, July 31, 2009.

According to *The Urantia Book*, “Ability to comprehend is the mortal passport to Paradise.” [26:4.8] (P. 290) So it would appear that the ability to find God depends on our consciousness of him.

A definition of consciousness that appeals to me is the notion of an “inward awareness of an external object, state or fact...of what is really at stake in modern philosophy.” (Webster’s Third International Dictionary) If this is extended to God, then the stakes, indeed, are the highest possible.

But we need not be overawed or intimidated by this as many people seem to be. The beauty of a celestial revelation is the help it gives to the mortal side of things. The revelatory text in *The Urantia Book* provides the necessary compensation for finite human mind to grasp something of the divinely infinite. As a proposition, this generalization is more than reasonable; it is quite attainable I should say.

A RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP

Our consciousness of God and His consciousness of us are wonderfully, beautifully reciprocal. The Universal Father has even gone so far as to invest in us a perfect fragment of His nature as we make our way back to the source and center of all things and beings.

This relationship is not only reciprocal, but a profoundly, beautifully, intimate one between God and mortal. Can you think of anything quite so intimate as indwelling the mind of another? There is every reason to believe and hope that the pathway of this adventure which starts in Paradise reaches down to individuals on the planetary shores of inhabited spheres and then returns to Paradise will actually work!

This is the core of our faith, the safe harbor of our spiritual imagination in time and space. Yet the religion of the spirit depends on the content and quality of our mind-set. Our ability to discern God depends ultimately on our sense and appreciation of His nature. This is where revelation can come to the aid of evolutionary mind.

Here, then, is my thesis: a truer, higher, characterization of God’s consciousness ought to assist us in developing a broader, deeper mental and spiritual culture for ourselves. Coming, therefore, to a better comprehension of God’s nature (potentially) should allow us to achieve a status akin in our personal lives to life and light—perhaps closer to what Jesus accomplished.

With this as a premise, it may be worthwhile to examine two general features about God presented in the first five papers in *The Urantia Book*. The first consists of His name and what is implied by that; the second is focused on salient characteristics of His divine nature.

THE NAMES OF GOD

I think it is curiously revealing that “*The names which the creature assigns to the Creator are much dependent on the creature’s concept of the Creator. The First Source and Universe Center has never revealed himself by name, only by nature.*” [1:1.1] (P. 22) I would like to suggest to you that the name we pick for God will undoubtedly be qualitatively proportional to the scope and depth of our consciousness of God’s nature. Utilizing the advantage given to us through the Fifth Epochal Revelation, let us take a look at the myriad of names others in the universe have given to God as a way to enlighten our own awareness of Him. (I used only names in which the first letter of key words was capitalized, sort of giving them the weight of proper nouns, for a total of thirty.)

God	First Source
Universal Father	Creator
First Source and Center	Universal Center
First Father	Eternal and Universal Father
Paradise Father	The Eternal
Creator Father	The Infinite
“I AM”	Father of Fathers
Havona Father	Spirit Father
Universal Center	Father of Universes
Infinite Upholder	Divine Controller
Father of Lights	Gift of Life
All-Powerful One	Universal Disposer
Supreme Soul	Primal Mind
Universal Controller	Ancestor of all things
Original and Eternal	“Our Father”
Personality	(Papers 1–5)

The Divine Counselor, the author of these first five papers, is correct in reminding us that the important consideration is for us to get to “*know him and aspire to be like him.*” [1:1.6] (P. 23) Yet, a name can define, shape, and guide one’s consciousness of someone or something. Given our Agondonter circumstances, the predominance of the role of Father in that list (one third plus), emphasizes the power and grace of Fathering in human personality existence.

Fathering carries forth an attitude of love and respect that sets no conditions. Its consciousness is revealed as considerably

greater than even brotherly or sisterly love. In speaking about the Golden Rule, Jesus taught that on the highest or spiritual level, we should “*treat all men as we conceive God would treat them.*” [147:4.9] (P. 1651)

Revelation, then, teaches us that fatherhood is the procreational creatures’ greatest and most endearing thought-picture of the nature of God—i.e., our consciousness of Him—and one that ought to shape our attitude toward our fellow creatures. The God-like or Father-like perspective is the view from above: *spiritual wisdom* in contrast to *genetic knowledge*, and the product of celestial thinking and action.

THE FATHER’S SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to the significance of His name, there is a second general feature of Him, alluded to earlier, consisting of spirit characteristics of the Father’s divine nature. I have identified eight. These are characteristics *directly associated* with Him in the first five papers. They are living values of His perfect, infinite, eternal, universal, and absolute character. In light of His declaration that we should become perfect, even as He is perfect, we ought to make every effort to incorporate His virtues into our own character, hence, the importance of identifying the Father’s value-judgments. They can become, to the best of our ability, a kind of behavioral marker of our consciousness of Him and a manifestation as well toward our fellow mortals.

As I re-read the papers, I counted the number of times these eight living-values of God were mentioned. Using them as criteria, certain assessments may be offered concerning the potential for shaping human comprehension of our Father-deity. Here are the eight divine facets of our beloved Father from the most frequently mentioned to the least referenced:

Love	69
Goodness.....	28
Wisdom.....	21
Mercy	18
Righteousness .	16
Truth	15
Justice.....	12
Beauty	8

Love, perhaps as no surprise, is the winner! Love, goodness, and mercy make up a total of 115; yet, goodness and mercy, adding up to 46 together, do not total more than love. While mercy is love-applied and reflects the presence of goodness, it (mercy, that is) requires wisdom (insight and foresight). Interestingly, the Divine Counselor chose to point to love, goodness, wisdom, and mercy 136 times, or more than twice the other four characteristics combined—righteousness, truth, justice, and beauty.

But I do not want to take this compartmentalization of mine too far; all of these relative numbers are merely concessions to my

time-bound mind. For instance, all of the Father’s love is beautiful, true, and good! His mercy is righteous and His justice based entirely on truth. His wisdom is beautiful. Yet, love prevails!

Taken together, this sequence of the eight perfect virtues profiles our Father’s generous character; graciously divine attitudes; unerring insight and foresight; forgiving nature; perfectly correct behavior; absolute reality; fairness; and attractive harmony. His consciousness toward His creatures, who are really better described as His children, is a joy to behold. And still, His love—unfettered and unconditional devotion—prevails as the chief feature of His divinely complete and replete nature. For surely, it is a *Father’s love*, combining the primacy of a name with the fundamental value of this singular deity.

The identity and character of the Universal Father are indeed reflective of the divine consciousness and can certainly serve us simultaneously as a guide for forming and refining our own consciousness of Him, then, in turn become the basis of our own attitude toward those behind us, on a par with us, and ahead of us in the supernal ascension scheme of personality perfection.

I am grateful, my most sacred Father, for these revelations from on high of your incomparable nature. *The Urantia Book* itself constitutes another demonstration of your providential oversight and affectionate devotion as you delegate power and grace. I would like now to take this opportunity, dear Father, to express some of the range and depth of my appreciation for you by paraphrasing some of the statements in *The Urantia Book*—a book which for me Father is “sweet, soul music!!!”

I come now to worship You, Father, unbidden...in true liberty and joy!

“You, God, are alone; there is none beside You. You have created the heaven and the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; You preserve and control them.” You cover Yourself with light as with a curtain and stretch out the heavens as a curtain.

You are the everlasting God who inhabits eternity.

You are “universal spirit, eternal truth, infinite reality, and father personality.”

You are the “infinite spiritual reality” and You are “sovereign, eternal, immortal” and absolutely majestic.

In You, we all live and move and have our being.

Your understanding is infinite and Your greatness is unsearchable. You do great and marvelous things without number.

You are the Lord, who changes not, the Father of Lights in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of changing. Your counsel shall stand according to Your eternal purpose which You placed with Your sons.

You are righteous and just, Your natural laws wise, and Your spiritual mandates righteous.

Your mercy is the logical and inevitable offspring of good-

ness and love. You are the Lord who executes loving-kindness in judgment.

You are love. Your “love is universal”. Whosoever will may come! You would “have all men be saved by coming into the knowledge of [this] truth. You are not willing that any should perish. In all our afflictions, You are afflicted with us.

You are our Father; a real Father; a true Father; the Universal Father.

Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from You, the Father of Lights. You are the eternal refuge of the souls of Your sons and daughters. You heal the broken-hearted and You bind up the wounds of the sin-sick soul. Lord, You are our all-powerful benefactor.

You know “our down sittings and our uprisings.” All things are open to You. You understand what we have need of even before we ask it of You.

We know that You are at hand as well as far off, Father.

That You are ever-present and all-pervading. That Your spirit is everlasting and indwells the mind of every mortal. Because of You and Your divine son, we have a spirit-friend and partner within our very hearts, a guide toward eternal destiny.

There is no power but You, Father. Consistent with Your divine nature, all things are possible with You. You can make a way

even when there appears to us to be no way.

You are absolutely secured and everlastingly enthroned at the Paradise source and center of all things as the beneficent Father of all intelligent beings. You are the one God and Father of all, who is above all and in all. You go before all things. In You, all good things consist.

It is a recurring wonder to me, dear Father, that somehow You validate that creature faith which dares to challenge each repeated episode of mortal existence—when confronted with the awful spectacle of human limitations—by the unfailing declaration; even if I cannot do this, there lives in me one who can and will do it, a part of You, the Father-absolute of the universe of universes. And that is “*the victory which overcomes the world, even [our] faith.*” [4:4.9] (P. 59)

● *Charles Laurence Olivea has been a devoted student of the teachings of The Urantia Book since 1968, a commitment somewhat parallel to his classroom teaching of history at the public high school level. He is now positioned to retire soon from the classroom and to shift over to expanding his long-time effort to disseminate the book and its teachings while employing a strong pedagogy in that educational work. He serves at the pleasure of our Father and works with the Supreme as a cosmic citizen.*

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE APOSTLES?

All of them are listed below along with quotations from Paper 139 “The Twelve Apostles”. Can you match each quotation to the right person?

Answers can be found on page 40, but no fair peeking without at least trying to match them up.

1. “[His] strength was his inspirational loyalty...[his] great weakness was his material mindedness.”
2. “In following Jesus, literally and figuratively, he was either leading the procession or else trailing behind—’following afar off.’”
3. “He was the apostolic philosopher and dreamer, but he was a very practical sort of dreamer.”
4. “As far as physical courage was concerned, he was one of the bravest of the twelve.”
5. “The strongest trait in _____ character was his dependability; he was prompt and courageous, faithful and devoted.”
6. “It was the Master’s forgiving disposition which _____ most appreciated.”
7. “_____ especially loved Jesus because of the Master’s simplicity.”
8. “The most outstanding feature of _____ personality was his ability to see all sides of a proposition.”
9. “None of the twelve ever criticized him.”
10. “_____ was a good organizer but a better administrator.”
11. “The nickname which the apostles gave him signified ‘curiosity’.
12. “_____ was drawn toward Jesus because of the Master’s unostentatious humility.”

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. Andrew | d. John Zebedee | g. Matthew Levi | j. Judas Alpheus |
| b. Peter | e. Philip | h. Thomas Didymus | k. Simon Zelotes |
| c. James Zebedee | f. Nathaniel | i. James Alpheus | l. Judas Iscariot |

THE URANTIA BOOK, HUMAN CONCEPTS AND REVELATORY VALIDATION

By David Elders, Darien, CT

Okay. Here is what we, or at least I, know so far about the subject of human authors' concepts used by the revelators in constructing *The Urantia Book*.

The Urantia Book is not just a revelation of spiritual truth to all the peoples of our world. It is also a revelation of revelation itself. What I mean is that unlike past truth revealers such as Melchizedek, Jesus, or Adam and Eve who may have mentioned other revelations in passing, our text specifically reveals to us that it is the fifth such revelation (of at least seven) of epochal significance to reach our consciousness. Not only does *The Urantia Book* reveal such new and challenging truths as the Father's bestowal of our unique personalities, the Supreme (our *finite* God!), our responsibility for our own soul growth, our use of the Creative Mother Spirit's mind circuits, cosmic details of our impending eternal careers, it tells us, too, that truth must be experienced *before* it can be perceived. More on that later.

Treating human mortals of the fifth epoch as maturing adults, the revelators who constructed *The Urantia Book* openly owned up to the use of human concepts, when adequate, as the linguistic building blocks onto which they grafted new and expanded truths. They did so knowing full well that such honesty risked tempting skeptical human minds to wander into confusing notions of plagiarism, a kind of shorthand for doubts about revelatory authenticity. And they weren't disappointed. It's not merely that the plagiarism claim pointlessly invokes a narrow legal principle intended to protect the economic fruits of creative expression. The bigger deal is that such unsubstantiated assertions call into question the very validity of *The Urantia Book* as revelation, including the misleading identification of human authors' written work as "sources."

Hopefully current reader-believers of *The Urantia Book* will moderate the impact of the proposition that some smart human being "plagiarized the writings of other human authors." But how about readers yet to come? In echoes of some around Jesus who wondered how such a man could be the Son of God ("It's not possible. He's a carpenter. I know his mother, his father, his brothers and sisters"), the plagiarism suspicion sows seeds of doubt for later harvest by unsuspecting future readers. Besides, the very notion of such creative theft obscures the true sequence of revealed truth and its subsequent realization in human mind. So who copied whom? Fortunately we can rely on the fact that the experience of

truth in the soul trumps the logic of skepticism in the intellect.

Using one of the discovered text correlations as an example, here's a way to think about the sequence of events. Some 2,000 years ago Jesus expressed (perhaps unknown) truths about the nature of reality to Ganid in order "...to lay a more trustworthy foundation for the lad's thinking..." [130:4.1] (PP. 1433–34) Not only did this teaching thus enter into Ganid's mind to inform his own understanding, it was also thereby placed into human consciousness generally just waiting to be discovered by human thinkers in subsequent generations. It was. In order to reprise this Jesus-Ganid interaction and once again register these truths in our minds some 2,000 years later, notwithstanding what Jesus may *actually* have said to Ganid at the time, the revelators chose the evolutionary expression last century of Ralph Tyler Flewelling, author of *Creative Personality*, as adequate for the job. The revelators present this transaction as fact. The skeptics, however, suggest that what *The Urantia Book* describes as a truth-revealing interaction between Jesus and an Indian lad named Ganid was a story using concepts plagiarized by one well-read human author from another some 2,000 years later. But that conclusion places an unjustified burden of proof on textual correlation and begs yet other questions. Did Flewelling's words express truth? If so, from where or whom? And why not simply accept this wonderful interaction between a searching young mind and his universe Creator? Indeed, such linguistic correlation neither confirms nor denies the revelators' explicit use of human expression to communicate truth to human minds in familiar terms. Even as the product of intellect alone without prior experiential validation, such textual correlation fits nicely with the revelators' use of human concepts. As the simplest and surely the most appealing explanation, Occam would applaud.

Flewelling and other human authors whose thinking and expression were deemed adequate by the revelators for use in *The Urantia Book* are worthy examples of significant human accomplishment. Their considerable achievement was the soul experience and resulting perception in mind of previously-revealed, epochal or personal truths, perceptions which they then expressed in their writings, mostly in the early 1900s. These authors were fearless philosophic and spiritual explorers whose discovery of revealed truth was preceded by the experience of such truth in their souls. Morontia Mota 16 provides guidance: "*You cannot perceive spiritual truth until you feelingly experience it...*" [48:7.18] (P. 557) Since the initial manifestation of human self-consciousness

in Andon and Fonta a million years ago, everything we learn, or rather discover, of spiritual truth is revealed to us by epochal revealers, higher teachers, or by personal revelation. But it is not until such truths are experienced in our souls that we may then perceive them in our minds and begin the evolutionary work of understanding and refinement. We go as far as we can until such growth potentials are exhausted by actualization and the call for new illumination is issued to those responsible for fueling our ascension to the Father.

The discovery of those human authors whose thinking and expression were used in *The Urantia Book* should not surprise us. Their existence was forthrightly disclosed by the revelators in conjunction with their bosses' (superuniverse rulers) mandate requiring the use of such human expression when adequate to illuminate new truth. In fact, more than one thousand human concepts, reflective of the highest human knowledge of spiritual values and universe meanings, were selected for that purpose. Surely it was intended that we discover these authors and identify those thousand concepts. After we were tipped off by the revelators, it would have been pretty sad if we hadn't! It's not just that such discovery confirms what we were told. Examination of the concepts expressed also tells us about ourselves—like the level of human reality realization at the time *The Urantia Book* was presented to human consciousness. Or such study might enable us to distinguish between previously-revealed truth and its amplification and correction in this epoch. Even more, comparative textual analysis could help us identify new truths not previously revealed. For example, the fact that personality is a bestowal of the Father himself must be revealed. Such truth is simply not discoverable by human mind. These thousand human concepts are but the “let's begin with what we know” intro in the latest teacher-student conversation designed to expand cosmic consciousness and enhance spiritual perception in our developing human minds.

So, where does this all leave us?

At the beginning of this commentary I suggested that in addition to the universal and divine truths revealed, *The Urantia Book* is a revelation of revelation itself. This is important because by illuminating the sequence of revealed truth and its subsequent discovery, experience, and perception in our minds, the intricately-planned process of continuously-aided growth toward perfection is revealed. The ordinary method of regular epochal revelation combined with personal revelation is normalized. The narrative by which we can present our revelation to others is expressed. The conceptual frame in which we think about the reality we perceive in the context of response to higher patterns becomes clearer. Just as our knowledge of our Father must trail our experience of him in our souls, so the truths of and about him and his reality must be experienced before we can perceive them. This seems to be because such truth proceeds from him to us, not us to him. In the

domain of spiritual understanding, the gift of faith insight lights the way for mind perception.

This top-down sequence of revealed truth to human response persuades us to think about the human authors' concepts in the context of the revelation of *The Urantia Book* and not *The Urantia Book* revelation in the context of the human authors' concepts. Human thinkers learn from revealed truth. Revealed truth is simply not subject to suspicions of plagiaristic appropriation. It is a gift. The validity of *The Urantia Book* as a revelation of truth can no more be proven by the logic of intellect alone than can God's reality. God doesn't exist because we do. We exist because God does. The value of the truth perceived and expressed by human authors is derived from and dependent both upon its pre-existence and its availability to the human mind, and not the reverse. Acceptance and realization of these truths as presented in *The Urantia Book* do not depend on the words of the human authors used by the revelators. Nonetheless, those concept expressions can serve to signal to our higher angels and teachers that we have reached the limits of human evolutionary understanding and are in need of augmented illumination.

The skeptics' tools are inadequate for the validation of revelation and truth. Suspicion of plagiarism, standing in for questions of revelatory authenticity, is the child of skepticism and doubt. Whether at the beginning or the end of the skeptic's travels, the same principle governs: spiritual truth must be experienced *before* it can be perceived. The human authors' perceptions of truth were considered adequate to satisfy the revelators' mandate because these human authors had the courage to explore realms of spiritual understanding not otherwise responsive to proving. They followed the inner conviction of truth which led them to perceptions of reality existing far beyond the confines of intellect alone, in the province of faith insight. It is the very journey we, too, must make to authenticate the revelation for ourselves. Where we begin this trip matters. If our journey begins in the skeptical, doubting mind we need to bring our own light and ample provisions. If the experience of truth illuminates our way, sustenance is provided. And there is even a bonus. This well-lit path provides the only gift of true validation we can offer another—our faith certainty, our personal experience with inner conviction, the living Spirit of Truth.

● David Elders has been a devoted reader of *The Urantia Book* since 1970. He has served in the reader community in both formal and informal roles during this time. One of his favorite transactions from the book which pertains to the commentary above is this: On the way to Caesarea Philippi Jesus asked the apostles, “Who say you that I am?” ...Peter, springing to his feet exclaimed, ‘You are the Deliverer, the Son of the living God.’... Jesus said, ‘This has been revealed to you by my Father.’” [157:3.5–6] (P. 1746)

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATION OF LOVE TO THE MIND

By Sheila Keene-Lund, Lady Lake, FL

In 1990, I asked Ammachi, an Indian guru, if I would ever feel devotion in my lifetime. Her reply, “Love God because only God truly loves you,” catapulted me into a spiritual roller-coaster ride that lasted for many years. It led to my discovery of *The Urantia Book*, to being intrigued by it and then rejecting it, and then returning to its pages in a personal challenge to detect its flaws and disprove it. But the mind and spirit adventures triggered by my quest for devotion resulted in the faith embrace of an epochal revelation, and eventually, to write a book that reconciles its superhuman message with a wide swath of human knowledge and beliefs.

Along the way, a series of providential happenings changed the course of my life by giving me the direct experience of God’s love that eventually opened my heart to humanity. The increasing recognition of God’s indwelling presence and a deepening appreciation of God became the portal through which I could expand my expression and ability to receive love. A wealth of insights was gained when I engaged in a sincere exploration of all my previous beliefs. Epochal revelation was a powerful source of light that melted my misinterpretations of love and clarified its transcendent meaning in human experience.

Are we Pure Divine Love, able to love and serve others selflessly at will, or do we have to cultivate our capacity to be unselfish? Can we grow love as we grow flowers in a garden? What is the connection between God, love, and the mind?

The answers to these questions will come after we fully recognize the relationship between love and unselfishness and differentiate love from our expressions of human affection that are so often misunderstood.

UNSELFISHNESS VERSUS SELF-NEGATION

Unselfishness is not a natural human characteristic. “*It requires the enlightenment of reason, morality, and the urge of religion, God-knowingness, to generate an unselfish and altruistic social order.*” [16:9.7] (P. 196) Unselfishness is born of an increasing brotherhood consciousness and love that come with the recognition of God as Father of all.

Unselfishness—being selfless—isn’t a masochistic tendency rooted in self-denial and suppression of desire. “*The meaningless*

and menial practices of an ostentatious and false humility are incompatible with the appreciation of the source of your salvation and the recognition of the destiny of your spirit-born souls. Humility before God is altogether appropriate in the depths of your hearts; meekness before men is commendable; but the hypocrisy of self-conscious and attention-craving humility is childish and unworthy of the enlightened sons of the kingdom.” [149:6.10] (P. 1676) Well-intentioned acts of convenience or actions with expectation of reward may be benevolent, but still fall into the human realm of self-interest.

As we grow in our understanding of God, we grow in our appreciation of his selfless nature and the desire to emulate his nature in our relations with others—not from a sense of duty but from the inspiration of love. As we grow in awareness of our Indwelling Spirit, we increasingly recognize that godliness is the destiny of humanity. A spiritual reverence and deep conviction

Along the way, a series of providential happenings changed the course of my life by giving me the direct experience of God’s love that eventually opened my heart to humanity.

evolve within our soul, reflected in the declaration “*It is my will that your will be done.*” [111:5.6] (P. 1221) [118:8.11] (P. 1303) In other words, I choose to show my love and appreciation for God by striving to be Godlike, thereby deepening the capacity to lovingly serve my fellow human beings.

A healthy family unit provides the best setting for learning unselfishness. Ideally, parents embrace the supreme responsibility of assisting the child in the battles of life by caring and through training the child to become a self-supporting, wise, loving, and honest individual who can contribute to the progress of civilization. The young adult attains respect and trust for her parents, not from obligations but as a result of the quality of care, training, and affection that the parents display. “*The true parent is engaged in a continuous service-ministry which the wise child comes to recognize and appreciate.*” [84:7.26] (P. 941) Young adults are thus trained to expand their perception of a loving family to include their neighbors, their country, and the world.

This quality of unselfishness is the real measure of human greatness. To nurture the selfless element in moral behavior is to nurture the capacity to love, trust, and respect—capacities that

thrive on knowledge of God and enhanced spiritual insight. We may have high moral standards and be idealistic, but growth in spiritual insight transforms morality into a driving force of enlightened change for societies and nations.

LOVE DEFINED

“Love is the outworking of the divine and inner urge of life. It is founded on understanding, nurtured by unselfish service, and perfected in wisdom.” [174:1.5] (P. 1898) Pure love activates the highest expression of trust, respect, and devotion, and rises above conditional feelings and circumstances. Known to the ancient Greeks as *agape*, it is the force that holds the various conditional expressions of human affection in place. “Agape has to do with the mind: it is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. Agape has supremely to do with the will.”¹

The personal attitude of love springs from loyalty to both divine duty and human need. It activates the unconditional and beneficial concern for the good of others and is expressed in respectful and unselfish behavior. Our depth of love and the quality of its expression is proportional to our comprehension of Deity, our efforts to cultivate the qualities of divinity, and our receptivity to the guidance of the Indwelling Spirit.

Unlike the instability of emotions or fickleness of affection, pure love is loyal, forgiving, reliable, compassionate, and truthful. A profound and poetic description of love is found in 1

cepts of the highest cosmic good of the individual who is loved. And then love goes on to strike this same attitude concerning all other individuals who could possibly be influenced by the growing and living relationship of one spirit-led mortal’s love for other citizens of the universe. And this entire living adaptation of love must be effected in the light of both the environment of present evil and the eternal goal of the perfection of divine destiny.” [180:5.10] (P. 1950)

CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

There are several expressions of human affection that are instinctive and, unless cultivated, often remain conditional:

- The natural liking or admiration people have for one another was known by the ancient Greeks as *phileo* and arises out of benevolence or common interests. Most friendships are built on *phileo*. It is the type of affection that says: “I like you if . . .”
- Familial love, which includes parental love, was labeled by the Greeks as *storge*. *Storge* is a strong, bonding, and protective love toward an animal, object, or person. A living being with *storge* feels a strong sense of duty and is often willing to die to protect this love. *Storge* is a conditional love that says: “I love you because I should.” The strength and devotion of *storge* is often proportional to the need of the loved one and may be thwarted by influences such as ambition, selfishness, or religious conviction.
- Physical attraction, called *eros* by the ancient Greeks, is the chemical reaction, the sex urge, the infatuation between two

Pure love activates the highest expression of trust, respect, and devotion, and rises above conditional feelings and circumstances. Known to the ancient Greeks as *agape*, it is the force that holds the various conditional expressions of human affection in place.

Corinthians 13:4–7 (*New American Standard Bible*): “Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” Without love, the other virtues lose their vigor.

Love and unselfishness go hand in hand. Selfishness is an inherent characteristic of human behavior; people outside the immediate family are not naturally loved or socially served. Therefore, unconditional love must be cultivated. “*Love, unselfishness, must undergo a constant and living readaptative interpretation of relationships in accordance with the leading of the Spirit of Truth. Love must thereby grasp the ever-changing and enlarging con-*

people. “*Notwithstanding the personality gulf between men and women, the sex urge is sufficient to insure their coming together for the reproduction of the species. This instinct operated effectively long before humans experienced much of what was later called love, devotion, and marital loyalty.*” [82:1.1] (P. 913) *Eros* is often mistaken for love and therefore easily abused. Without *phileo* and *storge*, *eros* is passion, the sex urge that, when unbridled, can devastate personal lives, its effect radiating into families and society. But the sex impulse is the catalyst that eventually leads to love. *Eros* gets beyond the romance stage with the support of *phileo*, *storge*, and *agape*, which helps sustain the friendship and spirituality that long-term relationships require.

THE HEART AND THE HUMAN MIND

After starting my journey into devotion, the most common expressions I heard were, “Follow your heart” and “Listen to your heart, not your mind.” I knew that in spiritual circles, the heart had long been considered the energy center from which feelings of love emanated. While my friends kept insisting that love grows through the practice of meditation, I instinctively knew that a greater understanding of God was my path to loving more deeply.

Meditation is generally considered to be a technique for opening the heart to spirit, yet the spirituality I witnessed in the meditating community in which I lived was not the vibrant and selfless spirituality that I truly desired. After years of meditation and deep subjective experiences, my connection to God remained impersonal and lacked devotion. Likewise, my relationships with others were friendly but guarded and often judgmental. I even found myself indulging in an “enlightened” self-image, the shadow of spiritual ego.

It wasn't until I allowed my mind to explore the *personality* of God through the cosmic lens of epochal revelation that I began to feel spiritual humility and sense a change in the quality and depth of my love for others. Reconciling these experiences with news from the emerging science of neurocardiology served to deepen my understanding of the subtle ties between the mind, heart, and spirit.

While the mind is “[t]he thinking, perceiving, and feeling mechanism of the human organism,” [F:V.8] (P. 8) scientists are offering new insight into the intimate connection between the heart and the brain: “Groundbreaking research in the field of neurocardiology has established that the heart is a sensory organ and a sophisticated information encoding and processing center, with an extensive intrinsic nervous system sufficiently sophisticated to qualify as a ‘heart brain.’”² In fact, “. . . about sixty to sixty-five percent of all the cells in the heart are neural cells which are precisely the same as in the brain, functioning in precisely the same way, monitoring and maintaining control of the entire mind/body physical process as well as direct unmediated connections between the heart and the emotional, cognitive structures of the brain.”³

Humans were created and wired to know God and experience his love. The heart is where we “feel” love, and the mind is where the Indwelling Spirit fosters the love of God and individualizes the Father's love in each human soul. It is through the mind that we can know and love God and know and love our neighbors. Through the cultivation of universal intelligence and the application of those associated insights in our daily lives, we can experience the full and undiminished impact of the Father's love in our hearts.

The *quality* of our experience of the Father's love is always varied and unlimited. And though we can share human affec-

tion without developing our consciousness, that affection remains conditional, selective, and incomplete; it pales in comparison to the human reflection of divine and enduring love. The quantity of the Father's love that we experience is precisely measured by our spiritual receptivity and capacity to return the love of our Father. The more we know and love God as our Father, the better we can understand and live the familial relationship that we share with each human being. When we act with love toward our fellow humans, the Father's love becomes increasingly reflected in our experience, and that love is replete, compassionate, trusting, reverent, and unconditional.

The mind is the key to attaining new and higher spiritual meanings and values—and to expressing and experiencing greater love in our hearts. The cultivation of universal intelligence forges the gap between basic human affection and living agape love. “*While the mind is not the seat of the spiritual nature, it is indeed the gateway thereto.*” [155:6.13] (P. 1733)

● Sheila Keene-Lund is a long-time student of The Urantia Book and serves as Education Committee Chair of UAI and Vice President of Urantia Association of Florida. This article is excerpted from her new book, *Heaven Is Not the Last Stop*, which offers the first full explication of the Urantia revelation along with a framework for “*Living the Religion of the Spirit*” based on its teachings. In the last two years, Keene-Lund has presented at Fellowship, UAI, and unaffiliated conferences and retreats. She is currently promoting her book with appearances in the United States and internationally. Copies are now available at: www.heavenisnotthelaststop.com. You can e-mail Sheila at skl@sheilakeenelund.com.

End notes:

¹. William Barclay, *New Testament Words: The Greatest of the Virtues* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000)

². J. Andrew Armour, *Neurocardiology: Anatomical and Functional Principles*, www.heartmathstore.com/cgi-bin/category.cgi?item=enro.

³. “Waking up to the Holographic Heart: Starting Over with Education,” a conversation between Joseph Chilton Pearce and Casey Walker, editor and publisher of the *Wild Duck Review*, on May 29, 1998, with the production assistance of KVMR, a community-supported radio station in Nevada City, CA www.ratical.org/many_worlds/JCP98.html.

“Love is the desire to do good to others.”

[56:10.21] (P. 648)

COSMIC SOCIALIZATION AND PLANETARY CITIZENSHIP: CAN WE BECOME COSMIC CITIZENS IN THE HERE AND NOW?

By Dave Holt, Concord, CA

No extreme spiritual disciplines are required. Even the further growth or development of consciousness may not be necessary. Although we won't astral travel to get there, our intention is to become cosmic citizens while still conscious of our earthly station. It may be merely a matter of choosing—simply making a decision to live as citizens of the cosmos. “We are poised on the brink of cosmic citizenship, on coming to know something of the other planets in our galactic community.”¹

Today, in spite of increased tensions of war and terrorism, the idea is positioned to experience a revival. This is due in part to the intellectual movement, ideal, or ideology known as Cosmopolitanism. It has been defined as, “the idea that all of humanity belongs to a single community, based on a shared morality,” or as, “the moral frame of reference for specifying principles that can be universally shared.” “Cosmopolitanism means ... being at home with diversity,”²

Cosmopolitanism is not new. It began as far back as ancient Greece where Diogenes, a Cynic, declared himself a “kosmopolitês,” a citizen of the world. Immanuel Kant reaffirmed cosmopolitan rights for the world's citizens during the Enlightenment in 1795. Despite the unfortunate name evoking a women's magazine we see in our supermarkets, the idea gets a lot of traction with today's community of future thinkers and philosophical writers. Most *Urantia Book* readers can expect to be drawn into this new conversation about cosmopolitanism eventually.

The former confidence our country had in its “experts” was seriously undermined by the worldwide financial collapse of 2008. Alan Greenspan, once the revered sage of high finance, stood before the United States Congress and made a painful confession that his “laissez-faire” economic philosophy was a mistake. Other factors stir a new moral outrage in our people: the continuing abuse of human rights, the chronic poverty here and abroad, the failure of consensus in politics, a feeling that our capitalistic system has lost the ethical integrity it had. Perhaps capitalism never had an enlightened ethics to prevent the drive to accumulate wealth on

the suffering backs of other nations, even its own people. Having these questions and doubts should not be construed as a decline in patriotism. It signifies an emergent planetary perspective, a renewed moral longing—the more urgent and pressing need to progress as individuals, as a human community, to make a good world. Though it may be true that cosmopolitanism is unavailable to those not members of certain elites, cosmic citizenship is certainly available to everyone.

The Bahá'í faith was founded over a century ago partly for the purpose of fostering world citizenship. The Bahá'í promote the unity of humanity, the ideal that people should love the whole world rather than just their particular nation or state. Bahá'í writings call for the next stage of our collective growth world unity and the organization of society as a planetary civilization. And the Bahá'í are no longer a small group. Their community comprises more than five million members in over 230 countries.

THE POST WORLD WAR II GLOBAL VILLAGE

A constellation of events, including the publication of *The Urantia Book* in 1955, was apparently timed to manifest after World War II, as if the world was ready to leap into the stars, toward planetary consciousness. Like many in 1968, I was smitten

The powerful symbol of the Woodstock “tribal” gathering in 1969 stirred our hopeful belief—a world community founded on peace and love was imminent.

with the theories of media culture guru Marshall McLuhan, who popularized the concept of a “global village.” The powerful symbol of the Woodstock “tribal” gathering in 1969 stirred our hopeful belief—a world community founded on peace and love was imminent. The United Nations had written a Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The earth as a beautiful blue and verdant living planet that hung precariously in dark space was photographed from the moon for the first time in 1970.

We saw ourselves in a new way. It inspired a vision of planetary stewardship. And an environmental movement desiring to

protect the precious earth as the common resource and possession of all humankind was born. Wendell Berry saw creation as “the continuous, constant participation of all creatures in the being of God.”³ Such a concept describes our relationship with the Supreme as it is revealed in *The Urantia Book*, where universe citizenship is defined as consciousness of “*experiential relation to the Supreme Being...*” [110:6.16] (P. 1211)

The Urantia Book reserves this ancient term of “Supreme Being,” found in the world’s sacred literature, for a separate con-

We must re-envision morality as a higher calling, one more conducive to agreement than the rigid moral judgments often trumpeted today.

sideration of God, that aspect of divinity that is changing, developing, growing, evolving, and incorporating the achievements of human believers.

A friend of mine came over not long ago to share thoughts about the emergence of “universe consciousness.” We agreed that a context was needed for such unity, “a way to experience universe consciousness together,” as she described it. Though my friend is not a member of a church or cult, she longs for this cosmic communal experience. She feels the call on either a secular humanist, or perhaps a “new age” spiritual level, and shares with other seekers the need to contribute to the creation of a good world.

The Urantia Book extends and broadens the idea, bringing in something more than just “universe consciousness.” The book uses the phrase *universe citizenship*, more often than cosmic citizenship, to describe membership in an ordered and governed universe, a higher, less earth-centric confederation than planetary citizenship.

The rule of one God known by different names, a God to which all planets and universes owe their allegiance, establishes such a context. But our religious groups have ideological, tribal, and nationalistic commitments that prevent this unifying idea, the notion of “we all worship the same God,” from becoming actualized.

It is a difficult step for my new age seeker friend and for other humanists as well; hard for them to accept “one universal God” when that same God is used as a battlefield by three major traditional religions, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. How can a movement for universe consciousness emerge from peoples whose ideological wars destabilize the whole world?

Battles are also being fought in world trade relations, as the political/economic forces of globalization face off against violent anti-globalization protesters. Cosmopolitanism was a response to the need to forge a bridge of communication between the two

opposing camps. The anti-globalization movement sees their enemy as a force representing the commercial exploitation of client states, and less sophisticated nations. They fear that local ethnic and cultural differences are being trampled in favor of a “global culture” imposed by capitalist military-industrial forces.

We have hardly come any distance from the hopeful utopian moments of the mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, the yearning grows, and in recent years the moral call for a more just world seeks to be expressed in some concrete form. However, only some of the people calling for a return of “cosmopolitanism” have a religious motivation. Some cosmopolitans believe that western secularization is the context in which a better world will evolve. “A universalizing recognition of a single common humanity ... cannot exist unless people are freed ... from the localism and potential excesses of religion.”⁴

Can a good world be made without seeking God’s wisdom?

WHAT CAN THE RELIGIOUS FAITHFUL CONTRIBUTE TO COSMOPOLITANISM?

Can the world’s religions even continue to have a role in helping make adaptations that will aid civilization’s progress? If religions remain too closely affiliated with the tribes, ethnic groups, and nations of their origin, truth seekers will look for a new road. At the very least, they will set out to discover a peaceful world within their own personal religious experience. This is a path that may be useful, even needed. The established religions must learn to more gracefully allow adherents to follow the path to truth in ways directed by their own spiritual guidance.

In our religious and spiritual practices, it is important to establish that which has cosmic value. We can reinforce those cosmic values we hold in common. “*It is much easier for men to agree on religious values—goals—than on beliefs—interpretations.*” [103:1.4] (P. 1130)

We must re-envision morality as a higher calling, one more conducive to agreement than the rigid moral judgments often trumpeted today. A static morality derived from ancient scriptures and preached by patriarchs of the great faiths breeds intolerance and fanaticism, conflict and war. As cosmic citizens in a globalized world, we must take moral actions that support progressive common purposes for the planet, the growth of universe consciousness.

The Urantia Book explains how cosmopolitanism can be moral without being the morality taught by religious idealists. “*Morality is not necessarily spiritual; it may be wholly and purely human, albeit real religion enhances all moral values, makes them more meaningful. Morality without religion fails to reveal ultimate goodness, and it also fails to provide for the survival of even its*

own moral values.” [196:3.24] (P. 2096)

But it must be a real, personally meaningful religion.

Unlike the community of cosmopolitan thinkers, religious communities are more likely to embrace ideals of “brotherly love,” and to have faith in the goodness of God. Ideally such believers strive to reflect a love of God as Father and Humankind as Brothers and Sisters in their lives. They try to achieve it through action, acts of service. “Love must thereby grasp the ever-changing and enlarging concepts of the highest cosmic good of the individual who is loved. And then love goes on to strike this same attitude concerning all other individuals who could possibly be influenced by the growing and living relationship of one spirit-led mortal’s love for other citizens of the universe.” [180:5.10] (P. 1950)

To encourage the participation of religions in the cosmopolitan movement, let us learn to consciously recognize what the different faiths have in common. Let us promote that recognition to others we come in contact with daily.

Commonalities in the world’s religions will provide unifying values around which we may all come together. Jesus taught “the great law of human fairness . . . in positive form: Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do even so to them” [178:1.12] (P. 1931) a teaching familiar to us as the Golden Rule. It has appeared, with variations, in the teachings of most world religions. *The Urantia Book* refers to it as a “rule of universal relationship.” [180:5.8] (P. 1950)

Other shared values in addition to the Golden Rule can be found in many faiths. Religions commonly affirm goodness as the essential nature of divinity, or at least they will speak of the outgrowths of divine goodness—freedom and peace. They teach that our highest calling as human beings is to carry out the higher will of this true and good God-Spirit, to dedicate our lives in service to the needs of our fellows. Men and women alike can find liberation and fulfillment in the acceptance of this supreme will in their lives. A common belief of the world’s religions is in the higher destiny for universe citizens who have faith in a progressive future. If not heaven, they will achieve spiritual liberation.

Interfaith religionists have a natural interest in the idea of cosmopolitanism because they have discovered and explored these universal truths in the sacred scriptures of the world. *Urantia Book* readers also take seriously such statements as, “There is not a *Urantia* religion that could not profitably study and assimilate the best of the truths contained in every other faith.” [92:7.3] (P. 1012)

They learn to recognize the validity of each other’s scaffolding. They acquire a new respect for the mythology and value system of

the other. It is essential that more of us gain a broader knowledge of humanity’s symbolic traditions and rituals. Understanding that our personally important symbols, metaphors and religious rituals can be linked to shared concepts of cosmic citizenship is needed to make progress. Ethnic and cultural origins are important, but taking into consideration human destiny requires that we understand the use of our own personal scaffolding. “*This world is only a bridge; you may pass over it, but you should not think to build a dwelling place upon it.*” [156:2.1] (P. 1735)

Many *Urantia Book* readers are members of interfaith networks. If truth is to become global, united in purpose yet not uniform in belief, joining an interfaith organization is a good start. It is a way to become engaged in the conversation about cosmopolitanism. To encourage the participation of religions in the cosmo-

politan movement, let us learn to consciously recognize what the different faiths have in common. Let us promote that recognition to others we come in contact with daily.

Jesus once taught an Athenian, “*There is unity in the cosmic universe if you could only discern its workings in actuality. The real universe is friendly to every child of the eternal God.*” [133:5.8] (P. 1477)

NATIONAL LOYALTIES AND COSMOS

In 1989, when I became naturalized, the United States government’s Department of Immigration asked me to give up my “green card,” and to throw it on a pile with the others. I discarded that visible symbol of my Canadian citizenship, taking on my new American status. It was a step forward for me, even though I still cried as I took the step.

Are we to rush out in a utopian fervor to forsake nationalistic loyalties? Is it wise, or premature, to expect groups to set aside national loyalties in favor of a cosmic association? Space scientists work in the hope of earning the general public’s acceptance that other planets with humanlike populations in all probability even exist. It is science’s way of validating Cosmos.

The Urantia Book attempts to address the “identity crisis” of modern civilization by suggesting the ideal identity, one suited to the higher aspirations of cosmic citizenship. “*The sincere religionist is conscious of universe citizenship and is aware of making contact with sources of superhuman power.*” [100:6.3] (P. 1100)

To the sincere truth seeker (religionist), I believe it is possible to step aside from earth citizenship, to open a window onto our

loyalty to a higher level. But even if such a theory is credible, we are perhaps not free in our minds and hearts to freely discard loyalties to our current place in time and space. Nor does *The Urantia Book* support the notion. “*Nothing can take precedence over the work of your status sphere—this world or the next. Very important is the work of preparation for the next higher sphere, but nothing equals the importance of the work of the world in which you are actually living.*” [48:6.26] (P. 555)

There is nothing stated therein to discourage the move to another country to better perform this “important” work of the world.

We can take our cue from Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of heaven. He informed his followers that kingdom believers become “*better citizens of the secular government as a result of becoming enlightened sons of the kingdom...The attitude of unselfish service of man and intelligent worship of God should make all kingdom believers better world citizens.*” [178:1.8] (P. 1930) So, too, should we feel empowered to become better universe or cosmic citizens, to represent the rule of God the Father and Mother in our hearts to others laboring in the dark. Jesus reminded his followers in “his last free day” on Urantia to “*render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s*” [178:1.3] (P. 1929) {Luke 20: 24} even while knowing full well that the powerful kingdoms of earth were about to condemn him to death.

Are we all cosmic citizens and just have not fully realized it? Is it because we are so hung up on being citizens of the United States of America, or Iran, or Pakistan? I think not. Cosmic citizenship is barely a reality now. It is a potential in our current civilization that is yet to be actualized. “*...action, completion of decisions, is essential to the evolutionary attainment of consciousness of progressive kinship with the cosmic actuality of the Supreme Being...*” [110:6.17] (P. 1211)

Jesus also taught that, “*The golden rule ... demands active social contact...*” [140:10.5] (P. 1585)

Cosmic citizenship comes with duties and greater obligations. It requires us to strive for a nobility of character; to actualize God (God the Supreme) in human affairs, for it “*is not a matter of meat and drink but rather a life of progressive righteousness and increasing joy in the perfecting service of my Father who is in heaven.*” [137:8.13] (P. 1536–37)

A cosmic citizen pledges loyalty to the truth. Such a citizen must in the face of universe demands choose progress, be willing to leave behind error once it’s discovered. Not to do so could lead one into a kind of pride that goes against universe, even divine, reality. “*Sin depicts immaturity dazzled by the freedom of the relatively sovereign will of personality while failing to perceive the supreme obligations and duties of cosmic citizenship.*” [118:7.4] (P. 1301)

Let us summarize the numerous resources available to establish a consciousness of community with the cosmos.

The need to make adjustments such as a shift in loyalties has become a more common experience in today’s world. Changes of nationality often take place in one lifetime. This helps prepare the communities of Urantia for the idea of planetary citizenship. It was a cosmic irony for me when I arrived to participate in a *Urantia Book* conference about cosmic citizenship the same year I recovered my lost membership in the First Nation Ojibways, a tribe of Canadian-American Indians. I’d reconnected with the people of my native grandmothers, regaining an ancient citizenship once lost in shifting currents of time and earth history. Thus I have in actuality been a member of three nations in my life.

The Urantia Book teaches a model of coordinating our knowledge on three levels: science (fact), philosophy (meaning) and religion (value).

1. Science: In the “real” world of economics, we become a more altruistic society as our people are increasingly led to seek service opportunities. As the profit motive gradually loses the power to dominate our actions, we will slowly witness the growth of the service motive in our fellow citizens. The profit motive has encouraged countries and individuals to dominate others economically. Indeed this has been the mark of success, resulting in a higher GDP (Gross Domestic Product) for developed nations, at least, up to now. Cosmopolitan thinkers are beginning to question the use of the GDP as an accurate measure of our economic activity. Other systems of measurement are being proposed that will reflect the true social costs of “growth.” As we think globally, and begin to anticipate universe consciousness, our economic resources will be redirected to the service of the planetary good.

Cosmic citizens cannot long refuse better information obtained through scientific research and still hold on to old religious or traditional creeds that contradict the facts. At the level of scientific knowledge, I can identify with the problems American native peoples face. They have, in some instances, just recently recovered their lost lore and traditions. Now they face challenges to the validity of their ancestral teachings. Some American Indians reject a truth uncovered by the scientific disciplines (genetics, linguistics, archaeology), the nearly indisputable fact that their forebears emigrated across the Bering Land Bridge. They insist in the face of such discoveries that their own traditions tell them they were created here on the North American continent.

Carl Sagan accomplished a lot in educating his fellow earthlings about other worlds that were capable of supporting human life. He predicted there were “billions” in the universe (well maybe a little less than that). His early pronouncements of cosmic citizenship hold more meaning today, now that over three hundred such planets have been discovered.

2. Philosophy: Certain religions, or sects within religions, face an inevitable struggle. They must better co-ordinate a progressing philosophic recognition that other faiths have equal access to God, equal opportunities to contact spiritual forces through communion, worship, and prayer. *“It is a fallacy for any group of religionists to conceive of their creed as The Truth.”* [92:7.3] (P. 1012).

Many people in the world are gradually learning a new respect for, and confidence in, the choice of a personal path of religious experience. Some are coming to understand the preeminence of their own acquirement of living truth, while they respectfully honor the more dogmatic truths taught by the religions of authority.

3. Religion: Hundreds of interfaith networks thrive in many countries. The Golden Rule provides a universal guide. *“[W]hen . . . spirit-led mortals realize the true meaning of this golden rule, they are filled to overflowing with the assurance of citizenship in a friendly universe,”* [180:5.8] (P. 1950) The Spirit of Truth responds to the people of all faiths and creeds who seek spiritual guidance. Perhaps one day there will be an increasing recognition of God as the Supreme authority on this planet. We may even outlaw war one day.

As loyal citizens of the planet Urantia, we try to make the best decisions we can to achieve progress in the world. Once we received the Spirit of Truth, the “mind of Jesus” empowered our decision-making, and gave us a new way to upstep the quality of our thinking. *“The God-knowing believer increasingly experiences the ecstasy and grandeur of spiritual socialization on a universe scale—citizenship on high in association with the eternal realization of the divine destiny of perfection attainment.”* [184:4.6] (P. 1985)

THE COSMOPOLIS AND WORLD GOVERNMENT

Most cosmopolitan thinkers have goals that are politically oriented. They seek justice, a fair negotiation of resources, better distribution of wealth, improved human rights for all. Martha Nussbaum defines a cosmopolitan as “the person whose primary allegiance is to the community of human beings in the entire world.”⁵

Jesus would not have necessarily agreed that this deserved our “primary allegiance,” as we learn in studying his teachings about the “kingdom of heaven.” There are cosmic citizens now who learn not only that the kingdom of heaven is within, but also that “the citizenship of the cosmos is within you.” Nevertheless, their worldly allegiance is to a president, prime minister, or king. This will probably be the case for a long time to come. *“Loyal persons are growing persons. Live loyally today—grow—and tomorrow will attend to itself. The quickest way for a tadpole to become a frog is to live loyally each moment as a tadpole.”* [100:1.4] (P. 1094)

Although eventually cosmic citizens will help be the leaven that causes the bread of a world government to rise, cosmic citizenship is not directly tied to or involved with a political concept like world government.

The Baha’i understand this. Their International Group proclaimed in 1993 at the United Nations that, “World citizenship begins with an acceptance of the oneness of the human family . . . while it encourages a sane and legitimate patriotism, it also insists upon a wider loyalty, a love of humanity as a whole. It does not, however, imply abandonment of legitimate loyalties. . . .”

The Urantia Book teaches that seekers can discover the truth of this higher loyalty through their own personal spiritual guidance, worship and prayer with the indwelling God.

You can consciously augment Adjuster harmony by . . . joyful acceptance of cosmic citizenship—honest recognition of your progressive obligations to the Supreme Being, awareness of the interdependence of evolutionary man and evolving Deity. This is the birth of cosmic morality and the dawning realization of universe duty. [110:3.6 & 10] (P. 1206)

● *Dave Holt was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, of Irish, English, and Ojibway (Chippewa) Indian ancestry. Introduced to The Urantia Book in 1976, he joined the Family of God Foundation, and is now serving as Vice President of the Golden Gate Circle Society. An award-winning writer and poet, Dave lives in Concord, California, with his wife Chappell and has a daughter, Kelsey, now 21.*

End Notes:

¹ Druyan, Ann (widow of Carl Sagan) www.andruyan.typepad.com

² Craig Calhoun, *Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism*, p. 428 New York University, 2008 www.nyu.edu/ipk/files/docs/publications/cosmopolitanism_and_nationalism_nations_and_nationalism.pdf

³ Berry, Wendell. His essay “Christianity and the Survival of Creation,” can be read at: www.greenmac.com/Susan/W_Berry/Berry_Christ.html

⁴ Headly, The Hedgehog Review, *Critical Reflections on Contemporary Culture*, (magazine). Fall 2009. *The Cosmopolitan Predicament* www.iasc-culture.org/publications_hedgehog_2009-Fall.php

⁵ Martha Nussbaum, *Parriotism and Cosmopolitanism*, 1994 www.bostonreview.net/BR19.5/nussbaum.html

Bibliography

Beck, U. (2000) “What is Globalization?” In Held, D. & A. McGrew (Eds.) *The global transformations reader: An introduction to the globalization debate*. Cambridge: Polity

Kant, Immanuel. “Perpetual Peace” 1795. Essay can be read at the online Library of Liberty: www.oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=358&chapter=56096&layout=html&Itemid=27

Snider, Paul. “The Family: Birthplace of Cosmic Citizens” (1999 Plenary address, IC99 Vancouver, Canada www.urantiaabook.org/sq2000/psnider.htm)

World Citizen as described by the Baha’i Faith: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_citizen

TESTIMONIAL OF ONE SECOND-GENERATION URANTIAN

By Angela Thurston, New York, NY

My name is Angela Thurston and I'm twenty-five years old. In many ways, I know the upbringing my siblings and I received was not unique; many children are lucky enough to grow up with *The Urantia Book* in their homes and as part of their family routines. Some of these children embrace the book and some do not. It's not my intention to posit the critical factors that led my two younger siblings and me to accept the book as truth and identify whole-heartedly as Urantians in our young adult lives. Our free will precludes that blueprint. However, there are ways in which I believe our experience growing up in a Urantian household and community was, if not unique, at least a positive example. I will elucidate some of them in the article that follows.

FAMILY: IMMERSION WITHOUT IMPOSITION

I can't remember the first time I saw a *Urantia Book*, nor can I remember learning my parents were Urantians. The presence of the blue books on the shelf and their centrality to my parents' faith were facts of my young life, and I took them for granted the way a child of Christian parents might take for granted the Bible and church on Sundays. Some of my earliest, blurriest memories involve Jesus' birthday celebrations and playing at Urantia conferences, even before I understood what these gatherings were for. My parents were active members of the Urantia community and I, if not yet a participant, was avidly observing.

Moreover, *The Urantia Book* deeply informed our family culture. I didn't know at the time that my parents strove to live Jesus' teachings in raising us, but I did know there were ways in which our family behaved differently from my friends' families. Primarily, this had to do with emphasis on the family. We all ate dinner together every day. At dinner, we went around the table and talked about our days, so we always knew the details of each other's lives. On playdates at my house, my mom looked after us; at friends' houses, the nanny looked after us. Once a week, my dad and I drove up Flagstaff Mountain and talked and ate doughnuts and watched the sun rise. Every weekend, my mom and I went to the Hotel Boulderado mezzanine and read classic novels aloud. My siblings Jesse and Haley are four and six years younger than I, respectively. While of course we had the growing pains of any siblings, we also developed a remarkable closeness as children that many found unusual, especially due to the distinct absence of bickering and petty fights. A woman once approached my brother and me in a bookstore to say she'd overheard our conversation, and by the way we spoke to each other, was convinced we would

live great lives. My brother and I, at twelve and eight years old, thought it was funny. But in hindsight, the culture my parents created in our home encouraged Jesse and me to treat each other that way. By striving to manifest the Fruits of the Spirit, my parents also fostered them in us.

They also presented the teachings of *The Urantia Book* directly. Once a week, before we kids were old enough to begin reading the book ourselves, my family would sit in a circle on the living room rug for prayer time. There were two serious parts of this process. The first was to say what we were thankful for. Each of us would close our eyes and furrow our brows and think of impressive things—like our friends and our two cats—for which we were grateful to God. Then we would discuss a *Urantia Book* quote. This was selected by one of us (with a little help from Dad) in advance of the meeting. My dad worked in computer graphics and would design a little poster of the quote to look at while we talked. I particularly remember the night we discussed “The universe is not an accident.” We had learned about the Big Bang in school, and were so interested in the alternative explanation the book provided for our universal origins, that we kept the poster up above the cat dish for many months, serving to remind us—and our feline friends—that we were on *purpose*. The crux of the mini-study groups was how the quote illustrated concepts from *The Urantia Book*, and how these concepts mattered to our young lives. But the part we truly enjoyed came after. Analyzing the text was how we earned our reward: Fruits of the Spirit. Aka dessert. At the end of prayer time, we all got to pick a cookie (a “Fruit”) and sing any number of classic songs: “Jesus Row Your Boat Ashore”, “He's Got the Whole World In His Hands”, “Angels Watching Over Me”...even “Kumbaya”.

The Big Bang wasn't the only concept that came up in school for which *The Urantia Book* offered an alternative or deeper explanation. My parents did not shy away from exploring these ideas with us, engaging our innate curiosity with ideas from the book for our consideration. Even the basic *Urantia Book* premise that setting and striving for goals is crucial for personal development, was cited to help motivate us in school. Always in these cases, I knew I could believe what I wanted, but I do think it was important that my parents presented what they believed. After all, they were not only grown-ups—and therefore presumably much smarter than I—but the grown-ups I loved and respected the most. If they thought something was true, my first instinct was to trust them.

To my mind, the experiences above, along with many more, added up to immersion in *The Urantia Book* at home. I can't say objectively how much my home environment influenced my re-

sponse to *The Urantia Book* once I started reading it myself. But it would be hard to overstate how conducive the environment was to encouraging me to read the book in the first place. It was impossible not to be curious when concepts from the book were constantly popping up, and in such positive, interesting, and fun ways. That said, my parents never insisted that my siblings and I read *The Urantia Book*.

My dad was raised Protestant and my mom was raised Jewish, and both were dissatisfied with the way religion was presented in the home and the community. For my dad, going to church was a dreaded obligation that did not satisfy his desire for spiritual content. For my mom, being Jewish was a cultural and political imperative as opposed to a faith-centered practice. In both cases, rules took precedence over spirituality. As a result of my parents' mutual dissatisfaction with "institutional religion" and yearning for truth, they both spent years searching for what they ultimately found in *The Urantia Book*. But their experience taught them not to impose practical obligations on their children when it came to discovering faith. By living the teachings to the best of their ability, while introducing the book through inventive community and family traditions, my parents set an example that encouraged our natural curiosity to get the better of us.

URANTIA COMMUNITY: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

My family moved to Boulder when I was eight, in part because of the Urantia community there. Right away, we started attending Friday night study groups in a church on Broadway and Pine. The grown-ups went upstairs to read and discuss, and the kids played downstairs with a different supervisor every week. The supervisor was responsible for incorporating some kind of lesson into every week's activities. One week my mom brought in pipe cleaners and googly eyes and we made fan-dors to name and take home with us. Other activities centered on storytelling from Jesus' life, including putting on a Urantian Christmas pageant. This regular group lasted for many years, and, as usual, my favorite part was the cookies. At the end of the night the kids came upstairs, eating goodies and mingling with the adults before retreating back down to the basement to play tag.

I had the luxury of taking this community for granted because I knew no alternative. Of course there were other families with other kids being raised on *The Urantia Book*, and of course these kids also turned up at my elementary school and summer camp. As one of the eldest, I got to know many of the adults as well, and especially as I got older looked forward to having grown-up conversations with members of this now-familiar community.

That said, I knew our community was small compared to the youth groups and synagogues some of my friends attended. I also knew the Boulder group was considered large by national standards, which introduced some of my first questions about the

Urantia movement in the country and the world. On a weekly basis, I remember distinctly the feeling of being in someone else's church. There were Bible quotes plastered all over the walls, and the basement was full of Christian books for children. There was a poster of a beach sunset, with the text of the well-known poem, "Footprints in the Sand." I remember studying this poem, part of my regular environment, and wondering how it did and didn't correspond with *Urantia Book* teachings. Mostly, I remember wondering about the regular patrons of this church, and how much truth they had really figured out. In my eight-year-old confidence—never yet having read the book myself—I often pitied them the revelation they were missing.

For a period of time our study group tried to initiate a regular church service on weekend mornings, with hour-long services that included sermons from rotating members of the Urantia community. I can't remember how long this lasted, but various members of the community thought it was too institutional so it did come to an end. Before that happened, though, we had Consecration. During this ceremony of May 18, 1997, a number of us kids dressed in white and went up to the front of the church in a celebration of having received our Thought Adjusters and dedicating ourselves to the Father's will. At twelve, as usual, I was one of the oldest kids. I remember not knowing what it meant to be consecrated, but believing with full certainty that it was a necessary rite of passage. The grown ups said a few words and we all received our very own *Urantia Books*.

At a certain point, a number of factors contributed to our family ending our involvement with the Friday night study groups. We began holding a weekly study group with just one other family. The structure of these weekly groups, conceived by the adults, was as follows: First, dinner—inevitably pizza—during which the kids hung out in the basement while the grown ups talked upstairs. When they had finished eating, the adults yelled "time for study group!" down the stairs, and we slowly but surely emerged. One of the kids was the leader each week. If I was the leader, I would have selected a quotation in advance, usually about a paragraph long, to read aloud. This marked the beginning of study group. Then I led a spontaneous prayer and got to decide who read first. We went around in a circle, each reading about three paragraphs, and always punctuated by discussion. We tried to read a paper a week, and usually succeeded unless the paper was really long or someone had too much homework. After study group, we all gathered around the kitchen counter for dessert—usually popsicles—and talked and joked and heard about each others' lives that week.

We laughed a lot at study group. Being in high school, of course I sometimes resented the routine, and sometimes felt too busy or in demand or in love to spend my Tuesday night this way. But we actually had a lot of fun. We were all amused by the revelators' frequent commentary about how we mortals couldn't hope to

understand a given concept or how there just was no word in our feeble language to possibly convey what they wished to convey. We loved Those Without Name and Number. We had long talks about the reversion directors and the nonbreathers. When we finished Part I, we had a party. When we finished Part II, we had another party, and graduated to beautiful leather-bound books. I left for college before we finished Parts III and IV, but the group continued and eventually finished the whole book.

I cannot imagine the ten years between the ages of eight and eighteen without the constancy, levity, and community that defined our regular study groups. I am incomparably lucky to have had the opportunity to discover *The Urantia Book* with a group of people I loved and trusted, and especially to have had the mentorship of my parents and other adults combined with the partnership of my siblings and friends. Even though I was the only Urantian in my high school graduating class, I knew everyone at study group would appreciate my senior year book quote: “*The quickest way for a tadpole to become a frog is to live loyally each moment as a tadpole.*” [100:1.4] (P. 1094)

COMMUNITY AT LARGE: EXPECTATION OF QUESTIONING

My high school boyfriend was Orthodox Jewish. He was the first person who doggedly called my beliefs into question. In fact, my beliefs—and his—were the reason we broke up when I left for college. I was never going to raise my children keeping kosher, and he was never going to find space in Jewish Orthodoxy for an inhabited, governed universe of the kind I described. But even while engaging in heated arguments, and despite my full, youthful conviction that I was right, I found myself envying him. I have just described my gratitude for the Urantia community that raised me. But here was someone with centuries of tradition to back his points, with physical buildings to worship in, and with not only a community but a legacy. I envied that he didn’t have to be the sole ambassador of his ideas or defend against accusations that his religion was a cult or a science fiction novel. I envied that people had heard of Judaism.

In retrospect, I now think this envy had a positive effect. I truly enjoyed spending time with my boyfriend’s religious community, and craved its comfort and stability, while simultaneously noticing how the weight of its traditions reinforced his social identity without necessarily clarifying his spiritual understanding of why he engaged in its practices. This contradiction, along with our arguments, forced me to proactively question my burgeoning faith. Because I envied his community, it meant all the more for me to affirm that yes, every paragraph I had read in *The Urantia Book* rang true based on my experience and yes, it was worthwhile to sacrifice a comfortable institution for that truth.

With my high school boyfriend, I was the radical. With my new college friends, I was the dogmatist, accused of clinging to

the fundamentals of a text I kept in my dorm room. On the one hand, these accusations helped me learn how to intellectually defend what I believed; on the other hand, they opened the door to doubt. Because of my good fortune to be raised in a family and a community of Urantians, it wasn’t until college that I truly realized how “marginal” my belief system was. I hadn’t grown up particularly studying other religious texts (besides what is outlined in *The Urantia Book* about them) and I had never been surrounded by people with such intellectually-backed arguments about religion. I had also never had to explain mine so thoroughly and frequently. I would always give it my best shot: It claims to be a revelation...it’s kind of like a textbook on the universe...Jesus is a big part but not the Christian kind...there’s no Atonement Doctrine or concept of Hell...

But there were a lot of questions I couldn’t answer. And, inevitably, my least favorite and the most frequently-asked would arise: What are the origins of the book? I disliked this question so much, in part because I felt it shouldn’t matter. What matters is the text and whether it resonates as truth based on living life on this planet. But of course—especially to my mind-centered peers at Brown University—it did matter. And I hated that it mattered because I knew it was grounds for dismissal. An unsatisfactory answer meant *The Urantia Book* could be safely tucked away with the other weird cults one doesn’t give credence to, masked in the language of, “Wow, that’s fascinating.” I was often tempted to cite the strangeness of other religious origins, the unlikelihood of one or a few people, quarantined on this planet, figuring it all out and recording it perfectly. But I didn’t because at the time it seemed too hard to stand up to thousands of years and millions of people with a little blue book—even one all bound up in leather to look like a Bible.

These conversations took their toll, and though I brought my book to college, I never read it. After freshman year, I almost entirely stopped engaging people in conversation about my religion, and after a few ventures to the local study group—on one of which I brought a friend who couldn’t take it seriously—I stopped going to that as well. I felt too overwhelmed to be the only ambassador in school for this revelation, much less a world full of people who knew nothing about the truth I took for granted. Who was I to explain it to them, to be their very first introduction to *The Urantia Book*? I hadn’t even read the whole thing through!

The book teaches that eternal learning—and, therefore, eternal education—are essential to our cosmic career. After all the questioning my parents did to find *The Urantia Book*, I think they would be disappointed if I didn’t critically assess the truth they passed onto me, and question with the full power of my thought and feeling whether it was my truth as well. The learning I did in college, by thoroughly doubting, questioning, and self-educating about the context for my faith, was imperative to its growth. There

are times I feel almost jealous of those who discover *The Urantia Book* on their own, because I can only imagine the profound satisfaction of seeking truth and finding revelation. But I had a different and likewise powerful experience, of being given truth and choosing it. I had to question to make that choice, and I see questioning and re-affirming as a constant element of active faith.

I remember the day I first decided I was a Urantian. I was eight years old, and had just found out many people called themselves *Urantia Book* readers, as opposed to Urantians. This did not make sense to me. Not only was I an inhabitant of Urantia, but I believed in the teachings of *The Urantia Book* the way Christians believed in the teachings of the Bible. They didn't say Bible reader.

Not all eight-year-olds immersed in the teachings of *The Urantia Book* become *Urantia Book* readers, much less self-identified Urantians. Some never adopt the book as truth, and others are not ready to adopt it until later in life. But I think it makes sense

to at least inform the next generation of what it is they might one day be "ready" to adopt. There is a concern in parts of the Urantia community, I am told, that raising children on the book would be imposing dogma or at least unsolicited information. Much more studied arguments than I could provide have been made to the contrary. What I can offer is the experience of one who was immersed in the book, did believe more or less blindly by the age of eight, and did then go through an (I think) inevitable and healthy period of questioning and assessment on my own that resulted in personal faith, independent of my parents. If they had not provided me a thorough education in the Book as a child—through both explaining and living the teachings—I wouldn't have even known this faith was an option.

● *Angela Thurston lives in New York City, where she attends weekly study groups and is excited to be getting involved in the local Urantia community. She is a playwright and lyricist.*

INTRODUCING THE URANTIA BOOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's mission is to collect, document, and preserve the legacy of *The Urantia Book* and its history.

In July 2006, fifty-one years after the publication of *The Urantia Book*, *The Urantia Book* Historical Society (UBHS) was officially created. Over the years the number of records in possession of readers had grown in size to such an extent that the Society turned to the University of California at Santa Barbara for help. They agreed to house all that the Society had collected as part of their "American Religions Collection." That same year, www.ubhistory.org was launched and made available to the public.

The Historical Society, a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, currently has twelve members serving on its Board of Directors, all of whom in some way are educated and experienced in history or archiving. UBHS is an independent organization and is dedicated to preserving, recording, documenting & cataloging, collecting, and storing the history of *The Urantia Book* and subsequent movement both digitally and physically.

Many of the physical records in the online archive are the possessions of individuals like you who have temporarily donated their historical materials for digitization. The physical repository of documents is housed at the University of California at Santa Barbara, while the digital library of records is online at www.ubhistory.org. The UBHS website contains over 5000 records and is constantly growing.

This summer the *Urantia Book* Historical Society will be launching a new software program that has state of the art internet services giving groups from around the world the opportunity to record their history. Each group that decides to participate will be granted access to its own document or collection room in the online library. A volunteer archivist from that group will be able to save the group's records directly from the internet and choose which records the group makes available to UBHS Archivists for incorporation in the public archive.

The Urantia Book Historical Society invites and urges local groups and readers of *The Urantia Book* to participate in this important endeavor. This can be accomplished in several ways:

A. Start talking about history. Start recording your personal history and invite your study group to jot down its origins and its history. Make video interviews of your group members and preserve them for posterity.

B. Search your files for documents, meeting minutes, pamphlets, records, films, recordings, videos, and correspondence that you want to be safeguarded.

Share in the *Urantia Book* Historical Society's goal to collect, document, and preserve the historical legacy of the *Urantia Book* community.

THE PROBLEM OF BUSINESS

By Dan Amyx, Ft. Pierce, FL

Throughout my life there have been aspects of business that have troubled me. I have observed wealthy international corporations damage the environment, cause cultural problems in developing nations, even cause deaths, all for the want of money. For some people, this might suggest that money and business are bad or evil. But it is not the money that's the problem, it is the administration of it; the wielding of financial power without ethics or morality. Sure, many businesses follow the law, but often they find "loopholes" that allow them to do what they will, without regard to peripheral consequences. In other words, business generally does what it can get away with, and not what is right. I believe part of the reason is that for centuries, business has been treated as a separate entity from our daily lives. It is considered amoral, without morals either good or bad—just without. This has allowed men and women who normally live their lives ethically or morally, to take a sabbatical from proper behavior while they conduct their business.

A wonderful example was brought to my attention, when overhearing a business owner discuss a recent windfall. This woman attends church regularly and participates in other church functions, and she considers herself a good Christian. Her retail business is supplied by different vendors providing various products that contribute to her sales. One of her vendors forgot to bill her this summer for an order she received. She perceived their loss as her windfall. She had no intention of contacting her vendor to tell them of the mistake. "If they forgot, that's their problem," she said, "It's just business."

What is it that allows an otherwise moral person to behave so unscrupulously? One part of the question can be answered by human psychology; we tend to compartmentalize our lives so that certain parts don't touch other parts. This is somewhat like the behavior of my kid brother many years ago, who kept his green peas far away from the mashed potatoes—don't let my morals interfere with my money making. But an even more insidious reason can be found in the following quote:

When the final roll was called, the corporeal members of the Prince's staff were found to have aligned themselves as follows: Van and his entire court of co-ordination had remained loyal. Ang and three members of the food council had survived. The board of animal husbandry were all swept into rebellion as were all of the animal-conquest advisers. Fad and five members of the educational faculty were saved. Nod and all of the commission on industry and trade joined Caligastia. Hap and the entire college of revealed religion remained loyal with Van and his noble

band. Lut and the whole board of health were lost. The council of art and science remained loyal in its entirety, but Tut and the commission on tribal government all went astray. Thus were forty out of the one hundred saved, later to be transferred to Jerusem, where they resumed their Paradise journey. [67:4.1] (P. 757) (my emphasis)

Liberty with license was the framework of trade and industry, otherwise known as business, and is apparent to this day. This failure of business, to resurrect itself after rebellion, is found in our world economic problems. Business, as a model, is currently practiced without ethics and morality, as a zero sum game. It is the goal of business owners world-wide to get ahead of competitors if not crush them, and to create profit at any expense. The world's business model is obviously broken and in need of, not repair, but complete replacement. For those of you that understand "Systems Theory," you cannot replace a portion of any system and expect it to change. You must build something within the system and foster its growth separately. *The Urantia Book* refers to this as "scaffolding."

HOW CAN I FIX THIS?

For many years I kept a reference log of politicians and businessmen and their nefarious interconnections. The depth of criminal behavior was very deep and cast a wide net. This discovery made me both angry—because I felt there must be something I could do, and depressed—because in my heart, I knew the problem was so vast I was helpless to change it. I had to put the notebook aside as it was affecting my health and well-being. All this time I had been focusing on the negative, the truly despicable acts of people we were supposed to trust. This is like a starving man, convinced there is no food to be had, doesn't see the restaurant in front of him. Our minds, left to their own without guidance, can be dangerous to our well-being. I had to change my approach to the problem—and my perspective.

There came a time in my relationship with God, or "Dad" as I call Him, that I experienced the fact that I own nothing. I don't own the clothes on my back, the car in my garage, or the money in my bank. I own no thing—nothing. At first this was a little confusing. I mean, what do I do with all this stuff—throw it out, give it away, buy more? Why do I even bother to have it? But as I chewed on this concept for awhile, I started to feel a bit freer. I started to understand that these "things" were in my possession so that I may help others on their path toward finding God. A light came on: "my business, I can use my business!"

Over many years I have watched people use their religion to attract people to their businesses. As a "Christian" I have been

dismayed at how business owners will put something “secret” in their ads, maybe the sign of the fish, or use a biblical term like “maranatha” to attract similar religionists to their business, then, using the current business model, fall short of providing exceptional service, service from the heart. Religion in business was being used as a money-making scam.

But I could use *my* business as a ministry, not in a traditional way, but by using Urantia teachings in the way I do business. If we are all one big “Family of God,” then I had to change the way I looked at people that came for my services. No longer were these clients or patients, but these people were my brothers, sisters, parents, aunts, uncles, and children. A fundamental shift occurred in my relationships with these people—we started to become family. Some of these family members are difficult, some are affectionate, some are needy, and honestly, there are a few that I just don’t like. But they are family members nonetheless, and they are my tests for growth.

This change to a positive perspective has enabled me to change the way I do business. The effect on my patients and my business has been wonderful. If you could observe the goings-on in our office, you would be amazed at the camaraderie, the friendship and the affection. Because we look at these people as family, they feel a trust in us that they cannot find in other businesses. We give them advice when they come to us, we don’t just sell items that make us money. In fact we will often talk someone out of a product that is not appropriate for their needs. As part of this “honest” treatment, we offer a full refund if the person is not happy, and we seldom have to give refunds (maybe three in five years). Our patients know we care for them, and are interested in them, and they respond to us in a like manner.

Our ministry goes further than just the “we are family” thing. Everyone is treated uniquely, according to what we perceive their need to be. For some, we provide the best service for them that we can; they want and need nothing else. For others, we try to add something to their thinking, maybe a bit of positive philosophy, or a perspective giving them a wider view of life, only when appropriate of course. Others may only want a kind word or some respect and appreciation from us, something they may receive rarely. Still others will engage in wonderful spiritual conversations on the nature of humanity and his/her relationship with God. Of course these are the most exciting for us, when someone is open and searching the universe (or our shop) for meaning.

One of my favorite examples comes from a couple that takes great pleasure in visiting our office. Linda, whose dysfunctional parents have heaped guilt on her over the years, came into the office very distraught. After some discussion about her mother and ailing father, she almost pleaded for help: “I just don’t know what to do. I pray every day, I’m a good person, I do what God wants. So why is God punishing me with these terrible problems?” The tears

were welling up in her eyes. I had such a feeling of compassion for her, and sorrow for her burden. I said: “Linda, God isn’t punishing you. God doesn’t punish.” Her eyes opened wider almost in disbelief as she asked me to repeat what I just said. I told her that “God loves us and would never punish us.” These problems we face come from human relations and not an eternally loving God. I held her for a moment as tears flowed down her cheeks. “Oh thank you, thank you for telling me that,” she said. Maybe it seems “mushy” but it touches the heart of someone who needs it (“Whatever you do to the least of mine...”).

This is just one example of the hugs we receive and family stories we are told by our patients. Oftentimes we look at the waiting area to see people who don’t know each other, talking and laughing together. The air within the office is thick with the feeling of safety and friendliness, and everyone feels it. Well, almost everyone. Sometimes we are visited by the unhappiest of people and they can pollute the atmosphere with their distress; but we deal with them in the best way we can, often asking the Father for guidance. I believe these incidents are rare because, for those that are receptive to our treatment of them, they blossom and then bring their friends; for those that are not receptive, they go elsewhere to find their behavior mirrored to them, thus proving to themselves that the world is just like them.

But what about the money you ask. “To spend so much time on relationships, you can’t be making any money at what you’re doing?!” Consider this: our optical office provides a service that you can get anywhere, in the mall, down the street, or up the road. Eyeglasses and eye exams are not in short supply and there are wide ranges of quality and cost. But, we operate a values-added/values-based business, where the relationship foundations come from the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Where else can you get this? If these concepts are implemented with sincerity and the understanding that you are a “steward” for the business you “own,” and its purpose (in your hands) is to uplift humanity one person at a time, then you are offering something no one else can offer—no one. Of course, in time that will change and many people will practice these values in their business, but that’s the whole point. We want to infect others with this “Divine” virus of love. We want other business owners to adopt these principles, if only by observing us and how successful we are.

We bought our first office in late 2004. It had just started a downward slide because the minor-owner/manager was ineffectual and the office needed modernizing. In our first full year of “stewardship” we replaced the displays, flooring, etc., and began upgrading inventory. The first year our income grew 22% and the two years following, growth was 23% and 25% respectively. The economic slowdown in 2008 dropped our growth to 15%, and the figures aren’t in yet for 2009. In late 2007 we purchased another office that was about to close its doors. Again we replaced all the

displays, flooring, etc., and upgraded inventory. That business has completely turned around and is now growing fast enough to require additional employees. This is the evidence that relationship-based businesses can also make a healthy profit.

WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

If there is only one business in the world that operates using patterns and ideals from *The Urantia Book*, it's a wonderful thing, but a united and dedicated group of Urantia business people can be a planet-changing force. With the knowledge and perspective the Urantia teachings provide for us, we can combine our efforts and literally change the cultural direction of our planet, and hasten our way toward Light and Life (in an evolutionary way of course). The possibilities are infinite, but that's the way it's supposed to be—infinite possibilities. We are unfettered in the positive things we can do on this planet, we just have to believe it. Anything, in liaison with God, is possible. One day our planet will reach Light and Life, it is a fact in the Mind of God. Assuming this to be true, we can assert that business in that future time will function, not only with ethics and morals, but from what is true, righteous and beautiful. So what is there to stop us from consciously creating the beginnings of that future right now?

In light of these ideas, a *Urantia Book* business to business (UB2B) program is being developed to unite and strengthen businesses owned by *Urantia Book* readers, and consciously work toward the goals of Light and Life. This organization's focus is to create a network of healthy, profitable businesses that practice the highest concepts of living, found in *The Urantia Book*. In doing so, we are creating a wider and stronger financial base to support the teachings of this Revelation, and creating a new business model from higher truths.

We will begin by developing a business network, so that we know what is available to us within our community. We have started compiling "The Urantia Business Blue Pages" listing businesses owned and/or operated by *Urantia Book* readers. Names, addresses, products and services will be included in this directory so we may reference it for our business needs. All of these business leaders will be part of an ongoing discussion to develop the most effective techniques of utilizing teachings of *The Urantia Book* in our business activities. Each business will implement these ideals in ways most suitable to that particular business. We have created a basic form of this already.

As this network evolves, we will seek out cost effective services that will benefit us such as: group health insurance, retirement programs, merchant services, etc. Our combined leverage can be used to reduce our costs of operation and increase profit margins. In addition, we are developing a way in which we can invest in each other's businesses. This will provide much needed funds for new-business start-ups; equipment purchases; business

improvements, etc., while providing a return on investment that stays within, and supports the goals of, the Urantia community. If we are all tied together, we are more likely to help each other grow, honestly. As one grows, so goes the group; as the group grows, so goes the individual.

Of course all of this is easy to talk about, but this millennial project will take dedication, hard work and a constant eye on that distant goal, if only to remind us of what we are working toward. It will take the combined efforts of God-seeking, God-knowing individuals (that know in their hearts that Light and Life is a future-fact for this planet) to make this endeavor successful. I encourage you to participate in this relationship building, revelation supporting, soul-growing project to create a more loving future for those that follow after us. And make money and have fun while we're at it.

In Conclusion: Business, as a function of human relations, need not be zero sum in its goals. Businesses can succeed, even thrive, with healthy competition. In addition, successful business owners can make great contributions to society, education, and their local community, if morality and ethics are built into the model. A business owner cannot easily participate in his/her community if the business does not make enough money to allow the free time. Owners of successful Urantia businesses can more easily support the revelation and the activities that surround it, creating a wider, more stable financial foundation. This is what we are aiming for—*Urantia Book* entrepreneurs working together to build a better model, scaffolding within the current framework, waiting for its moment to become the entire structure. As these enterprises grow and become more profitable, these spiritized leaders can take a more active role in their community, allowing them to help others implement these models. By showcasing these higher concepts and providing practical evidence of their functionality, we can begin to lift the world's business model to one that would more reflect what the Planetary Prince's schools of industry and trade had originally strived for.

We cannot change the world now, but we can change the world of tomorrow by acting now.

● Dan has been an active *Urantia Book* reader for over thirty years. He recently completed a two-term presidency of the Florida Students of *The Urantia Book* and is currently working on several new projects to further the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. His wife, Lara, is a member of the Fellowship General Council.

Contact Info: UB2Bnetwork@gmail.com

UB Entrepreneurs: www.facebook.com/home.php?ref=home#/group.php?gid=137503970209

CROUCHING DEITY/HIDDEN SUPREME

The Essence of Evolution, Consciousness, and Service—Becoming Cosmic Citizens

By Bob Debold, Washington, MD

The following was presented at *The Urantia Book* Fellowship Summer Study Session, at Dominican University, River Forest, IL, on July 9, 2006

CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SUPREME—UNITED SPIRITUAL MINISTRATION

The Supreme Being is an entirely new concept that the authors of *The Urantia Book* reveal to us. They have told us about a finite, evolutionary, experiential, eternal god who does not equate to God the Father as conventional usage dictates. We must grapple with the fact that the compound term “The Supreme” (with a capital letter) appears 632 times in the 2097 pages of *The Urantia Book*, including 156 cases in which the term “Being” is appended. The approximately six hundred paragraphs include only three seemingly direct references in Part IV, “The Life and Teachings of Jesus.”

Except in the Jesus papers, the authors of *The Urantia Book* have woven the Supreme as a highly thematic message about this newly revealed concept of Deity. It just may be the most important new philosophic or theological idea that the authors give us; it most certainly embodies one of the fifth epochal revelation’s most stimulating and most provocative thoughts. While the concept of the Supreme is certainly not a hidden or obscure feature of the text, the evolutionary development of the Supreme is not entirely self-evident to beginning readers. Even long-term reader-students are somewhat puzzled as to what this mighty Deity is and symbolizes:

- consciousness of the cosmos
- one Lord of the seven superuniverses
- maximum Deity reality
- personality unification of the sevenfold manifestation of Deity in time-space
- power-personalizing unifying Deity
- evolving presence of God in a creational unit
- unifier of all things by reflectivity intelligence
- spirit personality in Havona
- evolutionary Deity that is something less and something other than the Trinity
- weaver of meaningful patterns of high value of physical events
- evolving superuniverse personality manifestation
- growing experiential sovereign channel to the existential Trinity

- father of Majeston
- cosmic overcontroller
- future master universe functioner
- sometime purpose of Master Son portrayal through bestowal of experiential divinity
- paragon for eventual planetary allegiance
- evolving personality synthesis of Deity unity
- unique avenue of approach for man to ascend to the transcendental experience
- religious assumption of the validity of mind, spirit, and the universe
- revelation of the unity of the I AM
- emerging personality
- embracer of all of everything evolving in time and space
- associater of all of the absoluteness of the several triodities
- member of the first experiential Trinity
- relation-requirement for universe citizenship
- connector of finite to absonite
- functioner of the universe approach to transcending finite limitations
- embodier of all creature evolution, progression, and spiritualization along with the experiences of the descending personalities of Paradise
- non-creator culminator (with exception)
- embracer of possibilities of cosmic ministry not apparently manifested in the triodity of actuality

One of my reasons for presenting such a long list was to bring to light the metaphor that Bill Sadler, Jr. always promoted—the teachings are constructed and written as a symphony.¹ Each of these short descriptions has a sub-context that connects to our overall effort of attempting to understand more and more about God the Father from our finite perspective. The list also points out how difficult it is to put the complete concept of the Supreme in a neat package. After all, we are talking about how the Father has constructed and is maintaining and creating the universe of universes through his corporative trinity, through his partnership triunity with the Eternal Son and Infinite Spirit, and by drawing on the three Absolutes of infinite potential. (To me it appears that at least some parts of *The Urantia Book* may be constructed like a hologram, so that each sub-context has the whole context somehow enfolded entirely within it. This idea may be a bit overstated and probably does not apply to every portion of the text, but I will speculate that the concept of universe reflectivity may be holographic in principle if not in fact.)

SELF-EVIDENCE IS NOT SELF-EVIDENT

Our founding Fathers stated in the United States Declaration of Independence that it is self-evident that "... all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." In juxtaposition to this historic and widely accepted statement, I maintain that the Supreme is not self-evident. Let me tell a personal story related to this phenomenon.

I originally started reading *The Urantia Book* with the Jesus papers but dipped into the earlier papers from time to time, so that I eventually ended up reading almost everything except the Foreword and the first nine papers. For quite a while I avoided the Foreword as it seemed too "technical." The papers I skimmed were usually a random, ad hoc choice, probably based on an immediate need to find out some initially obscure fact, such as "what is a frandalank," or "what is a midwayer"? Of course the details about Midwayers, in themselves, take a number of papers to understand, given the complex linkages that relate to their origins, not to mention their purpose in the current scheme of things. What I later found after a serial reading that took roughly four to five years in John Bullock's Northern Virginia/Washington, DC reading group was this large concept about the Supreme that I had not understood for a very long time. This fact became a true conundrum during one evening meeting.

After a particularly sincere statement about something someone didn't understand with regard to the Supreme Being, the usually relaxed and easygoing John stood up and went into a short tirade toward the entire group. He barked: "Don't you understand?"

I believe that we are all conscious of the Supreme to a certain degree, but it requires a nudge to turn this general awareness into some concept that is discernible and self-evident.

We're creating a Deity by our everyday decisions and actions." It was a real surprise to hear him bellow in his well-honed operatic voice, while pointing directly down at the front cover of the book. John was a patient leader-teacher, but this particular time was poignant with apparent impatience! (Although I have used quotation marks, I am paraphrasing what John blurted out that night.) Obviously John felt the subject needed some emphasis, and he literally leapt out of the chair when he made his comment. I remember being awestruck and dumbfounded, but instantly realized that I had been missing a VERY large revealed truth, for I truly

didn't understand just what John had said. This Deity that John was referring to is the Supreme Being, but knowing that is just the tip of a potentially unfathomable iceberg.

The authors of *The Urantia Book* address this dilemma in a number of ways. In paper 117, "God The Supreme," a Mighty Messenger writes: "*Men do not find the Supreme suddenly and spectacularly as an earthquake tears chasms into the rocks, but they find him slowly and patiently as a river quietly wears away the soil beneath.*" [117:6.25] (P. 1291) And then we have this statement: "*A human ascender can find the Father; God is existential and therefore real, irrespective of the status of experience in the total universe. But no single ascender will ever find the Supreme until all ascenders have reached that maximum universe maturity which qualifies them simultaneously to participate in this discovery.*" [117:6.21] (P. 1290)

SYMPHONIC ALIGNMENT / HOLOGRAPHIC CONFIGURATION?

(Although I have been talking about the Supreme Being self-evident,) the author quoted above discusses "finding" the Supreme. In between lies consciousness. I believe that we are all conscious of the Supreme to a certain degree, but it requires a nudge to turn this general awareness into some concept that is discernible and self-evident. This is what revelation does, since something that is "self-evident" is believed to be true without proof (but only if we understand what it means). For example, the Buddhists and Hindus developed the concept of the oversoul and came extremely close to constructing a philosophical postulate of the Supreme. They fell short because they did not understand the reality of personality.

A Melchizedek of Neadon tells us: "*In certain phases the concept of the One Universal Oversoul as the totality of the summation of all creature existence led the Indian philosophers very close to the truth of the Supreme Being, but this truth availed them naught because they failed to evolve any reasonable or rational personal approach to the attainment of their theoretic monotheistic goal of Brahman-Narayana.*" [94:3.4] (P. 1030)

But finding the Supreme is not merely about the functional construction—the "what" and the "who"—although that is a good start for a finite mind. It is also about meaning and value. Questions of "why" and "how" are of utmost importance to us all and may be the best links to the push-pull of Supremacy in which we all partake.

The revelators tell us that the Supreme's source lies in his relationship with the existential Trinity, that his function relates to the universe of activity, and that his immediate destiny is the Trinity Ultimate. He has three functions: first to operate as a spirit personality (God the Supreme) in the central universe, Havona;

second, to act as God the Almighty in the grand universe; and third, to serve as an unknown and latent mind potential for the master universe. The first two stages of Supremacy have been revealed to us and are discussed with some rigor in *The Urantia Book*. On the other hand, the wording that the revelators use is not as symmetrical as stated above. The phrase “God the Almighty” occurs only once; most references to this function of the Supreme use the phrase “the Almighty Supreme.”

According to a Divine Counselor, there has been much confusion because of the previous failure “to distinguish between the personalities of the Paradise Trinity and between Paradise



Figure 1: The Existential Trinity is the “organic” trunk; the first triunity is an “associative aggregate” shown by the weaving of the branches.

Deity and the local universe creators and administrators.” [4:5.2] (P. 60) Our priests and prophets in the past have failed to differentiate between Planetary Princes, System Sovereigns, Constellation Fathers, Creator Sons, Superuniverse Rulers, the Supreme Being, and the Universal Father. In the childlike state of humanity’s institutional religions and theological reflections, it seems that most of history’s celestial messages have been attributed to the Father, although Gabriel is mentioned in some cases.

Given the Adam and Eve default and the spiritual catastrophe that our rebellious Planetary Prince precipitated, I’m not surprised. What does surprise me is the great range and extent of the ministering spirits that actually do help us in our ascent, as well as the fact that we collaborate with them in ways I can hardly fathom. Of course, one of our universe goals is to participate in this service ministry at the level of our evolved and evolving spiritual growth. So it would repay us to understand not only the “who” but also the “how” and the “why” at a minimum. By seeking to comprehend the Supreme, I believe we can reach a better understanding of the “why.” I expect the other questions are best fleshed out in small group discussions. We will attempt to create a symphony if not a hologram of thought.

THE TRINITY ON STEROIDS

Before we can examine the Supreme in depth, we have to

talk about the first existential Trinity—the adjustment of the Christian Trinity—and the first triunity.

The existential trinity (the Paradise Trinity) consists of the Universal Father, the Eternal Son, and the Infinite Spirit. We are told in somewhat metaphorical terms that it is “corporative.” It is undivided and indivisible Deity; it is organic. Yet the same three existential Deities, as persons, functionally associate in a group called the first triunity. A good metaphor for a triunity is three people pulling on a rope in a tug-of-war; their efforts are summative, while the organic reality of the Trinity is best seen as the trunk of a tree (see figure 1). The trunk unifies the full reality of the tree. It is impossible to delineate the three branches of the tree inside the trunk, but the twisting pattern above the trunk is like a triunity, ending in three distinct, individual main branches. Total reality functions through the many triunities, but the Trinity, as a purposeful corporation, operates on all levels that unify reality as a whole. This implies that the Paradise Trinity is related to finite causation and is responsible for the existence and actions of the Supreme, since the Supreme sums up the totality of finite time-space reality. The Supreme is a finite reflection of the fact, reality, and indivisibility of the three persons of Paradise Deity functioning as the Paradise Trinity.

A Melchizedek of Nebadon teaches us about this truth: “Through the recognition of the Trinity concept the mind of man can hope to grasp something of the interrelationship of love and law in the time-space creations. Through spiritual faith man gains insight into the love of God but soon discovers that this spiritual faith has no influence on the ordained laws of the material universe. Irrespective of the firmness of man’s belief in God as his Paradise Father, expanding cosmic horizons demand that he also give recognition to the reality of Paradise Deity as universal law, that he recognize the Trinity sovereignty extending outward from Paradise and overshadowing even the evolving local universes of the Creator Sons and Creative Daughters of the three eternal persons whose deity union is the fact and reality and eternal indivisibility of the Paradise Trinity.” [104:2.3] (P. 1145)

Each of us is indwelt by a fragment of the Universal Father (i.e., a Thought Adjuster), but the Supreme Being has nothing to do with that. To the contrary, the ministry of the Supreme during the current universe age is collective and essentially impersonal, thereby resembling those attributes of the Paradise Trinity. The

Triodity of Actuality	Triodity of Potentiality
Eternal Son	Deity Absolute
Paradise Isle	Unqualified Absolute
Conjoint Actor	Universal Absolute

Table 1: The two revealed triodities are involved in the cosmic appearance of the Supreme. His evolutionary growth derives from these two revealed triodities—non-Father triunities.

Trinity, however, is existential and absolute, whereas the Supreme is experiential, finite, and at this stage, a work in progress.

Before we can discuss the Supreme in detail, we need to talk about one more existential concept, the triodities. Triodities are non-Father triunities. Triodities are involved in the cosmic appearance of experiential Deities. These existential threesomes are directly concerned with the *growth* of the experiential Deities—Supreme, Ultimate, and Absolute. The Supreme is firstly a spirit person and secondly a Deity of growth—evolutionary growth. This growth comes from the two revealed triodities, the *Triodity of Actuality* and the *Triodity of Potentiality*. Table 1 shows this relationship and the fascinating symmetry.

Thus, the Supreme Being is based squarely on the Trinity and sits between two triodities—the Actual and the Potential. In this symmetry, the Supreme is the summation on the finite level of the entire transfer process of mind, matter, and spirit, the process that we call growth by experiential evolution.

Apparently the Father gets out of the business of *direct* over-control of the finite, except in regard to personality. We can only speculate why, but free will is an attribute of personality, and it is obvious that the Father allows free will to function at the human level.

A Mighty Messenger tells us that our intellectual capacity is “*exhausted by the maximum conception of the Supreme Being.*” [115:3.4] (P. 1262) This may have been the challenge that stimulated many of the great turn-of-the-twentieth century thinkers like Charles Hartshorne², Alfred North Whitehead³, and Charles Sanders Peirce. Hartshorne discussed the infinite, immeasurable gap between the infinite and finite; this chasm was so large that he believed Whitehead’s postulating of a “dipolar god” amounted to instantiating a finite god. What they both missed was the belief (or the faith) that both could exist simultaneously. Since the Divine Counselor appears to have drawn on Hartshorne’s thinking about divinity on page three of the Foreword, the authors seem to have had considerable respect for these thought gems.

We need to consider one more thing about triodities. We are told they repercuss directly in the Supreme, but are derived through the eventuated level of the absonite, in the domain of the Ultimate. It appears as though the Trinity, like all good to great corporations, has set up the processes and structures for working its way out of a job. Trinity, Inc. is allowing its stakeholders to own stock options that become more valuable as they improve over time. The stakeholders have been given the duty and the responsibility of working together as an emerging collective to create a living organization.

THE WORK-IN-PROCESS

The Supreme Being is a Deity composed of “parts” and is actualizing in the evolutionary universes. In order to understand

what this means we should examine how this reality designated as the Supreme Being is constructed. A Mighty Messenger states: “*The Supreme Being is the unification of three phases of Deity reality: God the Supreme, the spiritual unification of certain aspects of the Paradise Trinity; the Almighty Supreme, the power unification of the grand universe Creators; and the Supreme Mind, the individual contribution of the Third Source and Center and his co-ordinates to the reality of the Supreme Being.*” [22:7.11] (P. 251)

The Supreme Being is incomplete at the present time. He unifies three domains of Deity reality: spirit, power and mind. Power effectively amounts to an orderly arrangement of matter and energy; the power of the Supreme is actualizing by the non-personal acts of the Creator Sons, the Ancients of Days, and the Master Spirits, the experiential half of God the Sevenfold. The Supreme Being is “emerging” as a Deity who will eventually present the “cosmic culmination” of the evolution of the grand universe when it reaches the stage known as light and life, or when the seven superuniverses arrive at the phase that is called “secondary maximums”. It is at this precise milestone—the moment in time when finite possibilities are about to be exceeded or transcended—that the Supreme Being will become a person whom finite beings can contact, i.e., recognize, relate to, and communicate with.

The Supreme’s non-personal acts function on the level of meanings and values—living truth, spiritual beauty and divine goodness, as well as love, mercy and ministry. By converting the untamed energies of the dead vaults of space into a balanced, coordinated and organic whole, the grand universe Creators are setting the stage for the rest of us to become participants in this vast network. We will eventually achieve an understanding of this power concept when we traverse and train on the superuniverse capitals, but it will take us until we reach the outer circuits of Havona before we achieve even small steps in comprehending the personality of the Supreme.

For us truly to “find” the Supreme, we will have to be seventh-stage spirits, and the Supreme will have to be functioning in the outer space regions. What we do today can barely scratch the surface of this immense concept. We do know that the Almighty Supreme is a “living” Deity. The Mighty Messenger author also states that the vast universe has coordinating centers that might be compared to the delicate chemical-control system of the human mechanism, then adds that he could tell us much more about the physical universe if we knew something about the physique of a power center.

The revelators tell us that God the Supreme has a spirit personality that functions in Havona. God the Supreme clearly started in Paradise as a personal Deity (a spiritual being) who exists on the absolute level but who embodies the potential for experiential growth that is associated with time and space (i.e., the finite

level). The grand universe unification that is currently in progress—in part, God the Supreme plus the Almighty Supreme plus the Supreme Mind—will endow the completed Supreme Being with the meanings, values, and reality of all finite experience, but of necessity we are still talking about a personal Deity who will remain a spiritual being and who will retain at least some dimensions associated with the absolute.

The analogy of a corporation makes sense here. The impersonal presence of the Paradise Trinity, working with the Creator personalities of time and space (i.e., in the superuniverses), is weaving the Supreme's emerging reality much as our morontia soul is developing in liaison with 1) the Adjuster, 2) our volitional personality, and 3) our finite potential (mind). In other words the total reality of the Supreme Being, not just the part that is the spirit personality of God the Supreme in Havona, is unifying through the evolutionary growth of the sevenfold manifestation of Deity. The Supreme Being is an experiential Deity, the cumulative synthesis of all finite reality.

LET'S GET PERSONAL—THE SPIRIT NUCLEUS

The revelators tell us that God the Supreme existed in Havona as a person before the creation of the seven superuniverses, but that he functioned only on spiritual levels. Therefore for humans in this universe age he is not *consciously* contactable, and that is a clue to why the Supreme is not self-evident. Given our inability to achieve more than a limited experiential contact with the universe of universes, we need some technique that will enable us to understand the infinity of the absolute Father in finite terms, since as humans we generally cannot perceive spirits.

While discussing an ascender's time on the sixth circle of Havona, a Perfectioner of Wisdom from Uversa states as follows in Paper 26, "Ministering Spirits of the Central Universe":

I am somewhat at a loss to explain what takes place on this circle. No personalized presence of Supremacy is perceptible to the ascenders. In certain respects, new relationships with the Seventh Master Spirit compensate this noncontactability of the Supreme Being. But regardless of our inability to grasp the technique, each ascending creature seems to undergo a transforming growth, a new integration of consciousness, a new spiritualization of purpose, a new sensitivity for divinity, which can hardly be satisfactorily explained without assuming the unrevealed activity of the Supreme Being. To those of us who have observed these mysterious transactions, it appears as if God the Supreme were affectionately bestowing upon his experiential children, up to the very limits of their experiential capacities, those enhancements of intellectual grasp, of spiritual insight, and of personality outreach which they will so need, in all their efforts at penetrat-

ing the divinity level of the Trinity of Supremacy, to achieve the eternal and existential Deities of Paradise. [26:6.3] (P. 292)

The Supreme provides us this channel and mechanism, but only the completion of grand universe development will allow us to attain God the Supreme. At the end of cosmic growth on the finite level—light and life—the Supreme Being will cumulate and perfect all aspects of his essence and identity, thereby enabling us to attain God the Supreme as an "actual divinity presence." There is a large difference in meaning between God the Supreme in Havona and the Supreme Being as the evolved Deity that belongs to the first experiential Trinity—the Supreme Creators, the Supreme Being, and the Architects of the Master Universe.

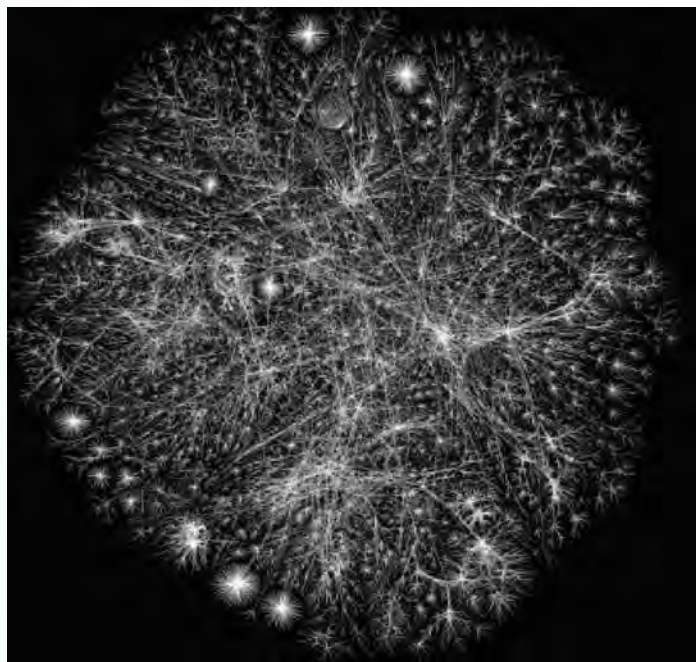


Figure 2: *What is this? The reader is asked to speculate what emerging, real phenomenon in contemporary society this is. The author offers this as a representational metaphor for the Almighty Supreme's organic growth. The answer is at the end of the references in this paper.*

LET'S GET PHYSICAL—THE ALMIGHTY POWER-PERSONALITY TEAM

We can now turn to the Almighty Supreme, the non-personal part. It is difficult to describe the origin of the Almighty Supreme. All we know is that the Almighty Supreme could not start evolving until the evolutionary universes came into existence, and that he started evolving as soon as they did. So we could postulate that the coming into being of the Almighty Supreme marked the start of evolution in the seven superuniverses. Here we are not just talking about the evolution of physical energy and physical power; we are also discussing the evolutionary acts of the Supreme Creators—the combined actions of the Creator Sons (Michaels) and Creative Spirits (Divine Ministers), of the Ancients of Days, and of the Master Spirits—as they strive to stabilize and perfect

the administration of the superuniverses.

Since the Almighty is an outcome of the evolving superuniverses, he is ubiquitous throughout all seven. But what “form” can we attribute to this presence? It is difficult for us to conceive of the Almighty as not being focalized in one spot, because we generally tend to think of a personal Deity in ways that continue, expand and perfect human characteristics. Thus, it is difficult to imagine the Almighty Supreme as a discrete “person” when we know that he is incomplete and so far from finished.

We also know the experience of every evolving creature personality is a phase of the experience of the Almighty Supreme. The completed evolution of the Almighty Supreme will result in one unified and personal Deity, not in any loosely co-ordinated association of divine attributes. What is most difficult to understand about the overall description regarding the Almighty Supreme during his growth phase is the “virtual” absence of personality.

Remember from the Foreword that the term “God” always denotes personality. The only reference to personality is related to the statement concerning the Supreme Being where he is referred to as “God the Almighty.” The Mighty Messenger tells us:

The Supreme Being functions primarily in the central universe as a spirit personality; secondarily in the grand universe as God the Almighty, a personality of power. The tertiary function of the Supreme in the master universe is now latent, existing only as an unknown mind potential. No one knows just what this third development of the Supreme Being will disclose. Some believe that, when the superuniverses are settled in light and life, the Supreme will become functional from Uversa as the almighty and experiential sovereign of the grand universe while expanding in power as the superalmighty of the outer universes. Others speculate that the third stage of Supremacy will involve the third level of Deity manifestation. But none of us really know. [116:0.5] (P. 1268)

The Almighty Supreme draws his very being from the acts of God the Sevenfold, including the Sevenfold Controllers. We must have a clear view of all this if we hope to understand the Almighty Supreme.

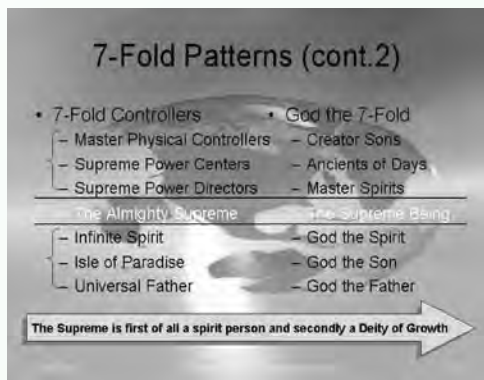


Figure 3: Power-personality alignment has a master pattern of 7-fold symmetry.

A Divine Counselor defines God the Sevenfold as follows: “Deity personality anywhere actually functioning in time and space. The personal Paradise Deities and their creative associates functioning in and be-

yond the borders of the central universe and power-personalizing as the Supreme Being on the first creature level of unifying Deity revelation in time and space. This level, the grand universe, is the sphere of the time-space descension of Paradise personalities in reciprocal association with the time-space ascension of evolutionary creatures.” [F:IL.13] (P. 4)

God the Sevenfold is difficult to visualize because he is not just one entity. The Sevenfold is a deity association of a group of beings—a very large group—who work together on the finite level of the grand universe, functioning as the Deity of evolutionary mortals in the Paradise-ascension career. Since the term “God” always denotes personality, we cannot imagine God the Sevenfold in the anthropomorphic terms we are used to. God the Sevenfold is not a Trinity, so the corporate picture doesn’t work either. Is this a being who moves and functions in unison? If we were to conceive of God the Sevenfold as having a personality, we would then have to imagine how to contact him, since all personality is contactable.

It seems more appropriate to think of “ministry” when we consider God the Sevenfold. The divine ministry of the Sevenfold reaches inward through the Eternal Son to the Paradise Father and outward through the Ancients of Days to the universe Fathers—the Creator Sons. This ministry relates to truth, beauty and goodness, and thus there is a direct connection with the Supreme. God the Sevenfold co-ordinates finite evolution from functional perspectives, while the Supreme Being synthesizes destiny attainment.

Another part of the Sevenfold is mentioned just once, but it is a very important part—and is directly related to the Almighty Supreme. Although God the Sevenfold consists of spirit personalities, there is a physical control level of this Deity association—the Sevenfold Controllers. When you put the two next to each other, you get a sense of how power and personality align. Figure 3 shows this pattern.

In contrast, Figure 2 was a current picture of a global phenomenon that I believe may give us a very crude but potentially useful way to think about how the Almighty Supreme may be power-personality synthesizing. I challenge the reader to guess what Figure 2 may depict and have provided the answer at the end of the list of references following this article.

COSMIC GLUE—SUPREME MIND

Supreme Mind is the ingredient that makes it possible for the other two elements of the Supreme that we have been discussing to exist as a unified whole. On the other hand, we are not told much about it. The authors have not given us a full paper devoted to Supreme Mind. The main account appears in section 1 of the paper on the Almighty Supreme, and there are a few other scattered references. To be exact, the phrase “Supreme Mind” appears

in only sixteen paragraphs out of 2097 pages.

In a general sense, mind is the “flexible reality” that creatures and Creators alike can readily manipulate. In the paper on the Almighty Supreme, a Mighty Messenger tells us about all we know about Supreme Mind, its nature and function: “The mind focalizations of the Third Source and Center. *The finite domains of energy and spirit are literally held together by the mind presences of the Conjoint Actor. This is true from the Creative Spirit in a local universe through the Reflective Spirits of a superuniverse to the Master Spirits in the grand universe. The mind circuits emanating from these varied intelligences focuses represent the cosmic arena of creature choice. Mind is the flexible reality which creatures and Creators can so readily manipulate; it is the vital link connecting matter and spirit. The mind bestowal of the Third Source and Center unifies the spirit person of God the Supreme with the experiential power of the evolutionary Almighty.*” [116:3.2] (P. 1270–71)

We also know that factualizing Supreme Mind converges as a time-space experience in Majeston, and we can conclude that Supreme Mind is developing concomitantly with the Almighty Supreme and God the Supreme in Havona. A Divine Counselor of Uversa conjectures that Supreme Mind is probably “concerned” with reflectivity, since the “consciousness of the cosmos” displays “intricate transactions and unerring operations.” [9:7.4] (P. 105) Supreme Mind is sometimes referred to as the experiential mind of the Supreme; it not only reveals the relationship of divine absolute mind with cosmic mind, but is also where that relationship resides. We are told the Master Spirits are constantly working to “stabilize” and equalize the cosmic-mind circuits. This may provide us a clue as to why the Lucifer rebellion was such a cosmic calamity and local catastrophe.

SUPREMACY—CHARACTER OF UNITY

Since we have discussed all three strands that weave together to form the Supreme Being, we should do our best to appraise how our own lives are affected by this awesome new concept of cosmic citizenship and the purposeful unification of all finite realities. Master Sons are uniquely able to portray the experiential divinity of the Supreme, and our Sovereign Creator Son—who lived on earth as Jesus of Nazareth—can do that, and has. Thus, Supremacy with a capital “S” indicates function. A Divine Counselor states: “*The Deity level of Supremacy may be conceived as a function in relation to finite existences.*” [F:I.11] (P. 2) Thus an act of Supremacy need not be an action of the Supreme Being alone. Supremacy pertains to the overcontrol of the finite level by any or all of the Deities or Trinities.

By implication, Supremacy with a capital “S” refers to phenomena that reflect the presence of the Supreme Being in the domains of the finite. The Mighty Messenger who describes the

Supreme Being writes: “*Human beings have learned that the motion of the invisible may sometimes be discerned by observing its effects on the visible; and we in the universes have long since learned to detect the movements and trends of Supremacy by observing the repercussions of such evolutions in the personalities and patterns of the grand universe.*” [115:6.7] (P. 1265–66)

Supremacy is simultaneously a dual movement: inward to Paradise—including the ascent of spiritualizing personalities—and growth outward “toward infinity and the Absolutes therein.” [115:6.4–6] (P. 1265) Here and there the authors offer us indirect clues. For example, a Divine Counselor tells us that the creation of Havona Servitals involves “certain phases of Supremacy,” in a paragraph in which he also conjectures that the Supreme Being is in some way concerned with the transactions that bring the Graduate Guides into existence:

The Seven Master Spirits and the associated Seven Supreme Power Directors, respectively, are the personal repositories of the mind potential and of the power potential of the Supreme Being which he does not, as yet, operate personally. And when these Paradise associates collaborate to create the Havona Servitals, the latter are inherently involved in certain phases of Supremacy. Havona Servitals are thus, in actuality, a reflection in the perfect central universe of certain evolutionary potentialities of the time-space domains, all of which is disclosed when a servital undergoes transformation and re-creation. We believe that this transformation takes place in response to the will of the Infinite Spirit, undoubtedly acting in behalf of the Supreme. Graduate Guides are not created by the Supreme Being, but we all conjecture that experiential Deity is in some way concerned in those transactions which bring these beings into existence. [24:7.8] (P. 271)

Another interesting statement identifies mercy as “*the justice of Supremacy adapted to the situations of the evolving finite, the righteousness of eternity modified to meet the highest interests and universe welfare of the children of time.*” [2:4.5] (P. 38)

REFLECTIVITY—FINITE OMNISCIENCE/SUPREME CONSCIOUSNESS

As used in *The Urantia Book*, the term “reflectivity” appears to be rather new. On the other hand, if we dig into the larger context (the hologram), we can postulate a great deal about just what reflectivity is. A Perfector of Wisdom tells us that reflectivity has “*impenetrable mysteries.*” [13:1.10] (P. 145) In a general sense we think that something is reflective because it acts like a mirror, so that the image of a source object can be viewed by itself. The authors of *The Urantia Book* appear to extend this concept by including at least “intelligence” and “consciousness” as additional ingredients. In the same paragraph cited above the Perfector of Wisdom states that the uses of reflectivity include “*intelligence gathering and information dissemination.*” [13:1.10] (P. 145) The

Infinite Spirit administers it.

Since reflectivity seems to be a level of consciousness of the Conjoint Actor, it may border on the Absolute in some sense. On the other hand, the very limited amount of information we are given tends to imply that reflectivity is mainly a feature of the finite superuniverses. It concerns matter, mind, and spirit in a collective sense, even though it terminates (or originates) in Paradise.

A Divine Counselor of Uversa tells us: “*The Conjoint Actor is able to co-ordinate all levels of universe actuality in such manner as to make possible the simultaneous recognition of the mental, the material, and the spiritual. This is the phenomenon of universe reflectivity, that unique and inexplicable power to see, hear, sense, and know all things as they transpire throughout a superuniverse, and to focalize, by reflectivity, all this information and knowledge at any desired point. The action of reflectivity is shown in perfection on each of the headquarters worlds of the seven superuniverses. It is also operative throughout all sectors of the superuniverses and within the boundaries of the local universes. Reflectivity finally focalizes on Paradise.*” [9:7.1] (P. 105)

Surprisingly enough, the Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia provides a good definition of reflectivity: “A method in the universes of time and space that allows higher spiritual beings to see, hear, sense, and know all things as they transpire. Reflectivity appears to be omniscience within the limits of the experiential finite.”⁴ The article then explained omniscience as the capacity to know everything, or at least everything that can be known about a person, including thoughts and feelings. In the traditional monotheistic faiths, this ability is normally attributed to God. In addition, omniscience is sometimes understood to imply the capacity to know everything that will be.

Charles Hartshorne discussed the development of process philosophy in his essay “A New World View.”⁵ In doing so, he asked: “How do we even know that things have passed away, if not by preserving in memory at least something of what they have been?” He then extended the question so that it applied to Deity. “If we are to raise the question of deity at all, why not consider a perfect or divine memory and a perfect or divine perception of happenings, once they have occurred? In such a perfect memory or perception the past might be literally immortal, adequately preserved in all its quality, all its beauty, forever.” This tends to imply that Hartshorne was postulating reflectivity as inevitability and a requirement of Deity in a universal sense.

SUMMARIZING TO SOME CONCLUSIONS

The following section provides some personal conjecture related to the previous expository material. As acknowledged at the beginning of the essay, I have made every attempt to portray

material from *The Urantia Book* in as accurate a way as possible. My intention was to refrain from speculation; I have attempted to confine the material to an explanation of what the revelators have said plus analyzing these ideas from alternate perspectives, and I am encouraging the development of a larger framework.

CONNECTIONS TO THE FOURTH EPOCHAL REVELATION

Did Jesus teach about the Supreme? Certain passages imply that he did, at least to a limited degree. Before I get to that, however, I would like to offer you a few comments on the overall context.

In a very general sense, Melchizedek’s message can be understood as faith and trust in God as a Father, whereas Jesus emphasized love and service. To me the central message of *The Urantia Book* is about cosmic citizenship, and that is why the Supreme is such an important element of the fifth epochal revelation. The

The Supreme Being is a Deity concept that did not evolve from religious thought, nor become a faith assumption in any of the world’s institutional religions.

Supreme is certainly ubiquitous in Parts I through III, one of several recurring themes that may remind us of a symphony.

The Supreme Being is neither the personality nor the absoluteness of the First Source and Center. Instead he is an *expression* of the *Trinity* in ways that finite beings may be able to understand. Yes, this new and intriguing Deity concept is extremely large and sometimes enigmatic, but it is definitely subinfinite. The Supreme Being is a Deity concept that did not evolve from religious thought, nor become a faith assumption in any of the world’s institutional religions. To the contrary, it first came to light as revealed in *The Urantia Book*. Although the underlying meanings and values are finite, in some ways they are as difficult to comprehend as the Christian Trinity was for the early followers of Jesus. Even though the Trinity was implied in the gospel messages that the apostles delivered and in their preaching and writing, it took considerable effort to explain to early believers that this teaching was not just a mysterious portrayal of three divine personalities of the Father under with one nature.⁶

While the Trinity required a great amount of faith to accept for the early disciples, the difficulties for us are not as formidable, for the concept of the Supreme Being includes aspects that can be understood as a logical and reasonable approach to reality. Given a small amount of faith in the accuracy of the fifth epochal revelation, readers of *The Urantia Book* can appreciate the concept’s

profound intensity and depth, especially as a way of integrating and unifying our understanding of the realities of the universe when they are mapped against contemporary science or just common sense.

There are three passages in Part IV that mention the Supreme in connection with Jesus' teachings. In two cases Jesus refers to the Supreme while discussing spiritual living. The other one is part of Rodan's summary of what Jesus taught.

1. While Jesus was teaching on Mount Gerizim about prayer and worship, he said: "*Worship—contemplation of the spiritual—must alternate with service, contact with material reality. Work should alternate with play; religion should be balanced by humor. Profound philosophy should be relieved by rhythmic poetry. The strain of living—the time tension of personality—should be relaxed by the restfulness of worship. The feelings of insecurity arising from the fear of personality isolation in the universe should be antidoted by the faith contemplation of the Father and by the attempted realization of the Supreme.*" [143:7.3] (P. 1616) (emphasis added)

The Midway Commission concluded this section by stating that the apostles didn't grasp much of what he taught that night, but "*other worlds did, and other generations on earth will.*" There aren't many references even in *The Urantia Book* of Jesus teaching directly about the Supreme, but he did make a clear statement about the juxtaposition of the Father as spirit and the attempted realization of the Supreme (capital 'S') that night. The apostles do not seem to have taught this concept of the Supreme at all, but maybe current readers of *The Urantia Book* are part of the generations that "*will.*" The fact that "*other worlds did*" implies that Jesus' message was passed along to other inhabited planets in Nebadon—and probably to many that were more spiritually advanced than Urantia is today.

2. While discoursing about good and evil to Mardus, the leader of the Cynics of Rome, Jesus said (in modern phraseology): "*By the time of the attainment of Paradise the ascending mortal's capacity for identifying the self with true spirit values has become so enlarged as to result in the attainment of the perfection of the possession of the light of life. Such a perfected spirit personality becomes so wholly, divinely, and spiritually unified with the positive and supreme qualities of goodness, beauty, and truth that there remains no possibility that such a righteous spirit would cast any negative shadow of potential evil when exposed to the searching luminosity of the divine light of the infinite Rulers of Paradise. In all such spirit personalities, goodness is no longer partial, contrastive, and comparative; it has become divinely complete and spiritually replete; it approaches the purity and perfection of the Supreme.*" [132:2.9] (P. 1458) (emphasis added)

3. During discussions of Rodan's with Nathaniel, Thomas and two dozen believers at Magadan, Rodan stated:

*The religion of Jesus transcends all our former concepts of the idea of worship in that he not only portrays his Father as the ideal of infinite reality but positively declares that this divine source of values and the eternal center of the universe is truly and personally attainable by every mortal creature who chooses to enter the kingdom of heaven on earth, thereby acknowledging the acceptance of sonship with God and brotherhood with man. That, I submit, is the highest concept of religion the world has ever known, and I pronounce that there can never be a higher since this gospel embraces the infinity of realities, the divinity of values, and the eternity of universal attainments. **Such a concept constitutes the achievement of the experience of the idealism of the supreme and the ultimate.** [160:5.7] (P. 1781) (emphasis added)*

Although "supreme" and "ultimate" are not capitalized, I have the impression that Rodan—the only human being who is cited in *The Urantia Book* as a direct source of spiritual teachings—came very close to understanding the advanced teachings of Jesus, the true meaning of his term "the kingdom". Later in the discussion, Rodan says that this religion he has learned from Jesus "*demand[s] living and spiritual experience.*" [160:5.12] (P. 1782) This is very close to a Mighty Messenger's statement that achievement is the prerequisite to status with God the Supreme: "*one must do something as well as be something.*" [115:0.1] (P. 1260)

COSMIC SOCIALIZATION

We are told that our ascent through the psychic circles involves "cosmic socialization." Attainment of the circles, sometimes known as "cosmic circles," has to do with personality status, mind attainment, soul growth, and Adjuster attunement. A Mighty Messenger visiting on Urantia, and in collaboration with a certain Melchizedek, the vicegerent Planetary Prince of Urantia, tells us: "*Every impulse of every electron, thought, or spirit is an acting unit in the whole universe. Only sin is isolated and evil gravity resisting on the mental and spiritual levels. The universe is a whole; no thing or being exists or lives in isolation. Self-realization is potentially evil if it is antisocial. It is literally true: 'No man lives by himself.'*" Cosmic socialization constitutes the highest form of personality unification. Said Jesus: "*He who would be greatest among you, let him become server of all.*" [56:10.14] (P. 647)

Cosmic socialization, according to David Kantor in his plenary address in 1999 in Vancouver, sets the locus of spiritual growth in the relationship between personalities. Note the term personality; it embraces all personal entities of the universe, including humans. The Mighty Messenger whom I cited above was referring to relationships that extend from the Paradise Trinity right on down to our human enemies; this obviously includes the universe panoply of ministering personalities who are distributed among

the angelic orders. I believe that the process of personality integration through relationships with others is one of the messages that Jesus meant to convey in his teachings on the brotherhood of man. Brotherhood is the other half of the paradox of the part and the whole.⁷ [12:7] (PP. 137–39) (Debold 1998)

Over the years, as the teachings of *The Urantia Book* have mellowed and matured in my mind, the ideal of developing a philosophy of living as the Divine Counselor recommends has been gaining momentum in my thinking and has begun to influence my everyday interactions with others. Comments that the religion of Jesus “*must develop a new and appropriate symbolism*” from new and expanding ideas, ideals and loyalties, makes more sense if these symbols are staunchly based on the paradigm of cosmic citizenship. Since the revelators urge us to predicate this higher symbolism on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, we should consider what process of development will make the new philosophy of living attractive and influential among fellow inhabitants of our planet Urantia.

The Midwayers tell us that Jesus’ concept of the kingdom must likewise reflect the dual concept of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This living gospel encompasses living faith, growing spirit, and firsthand experience of the faith-comrades of Jesus in the brotherhood of man as a hallmark of the spiritual association of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus always taught that the kingdom embraces man’s personal relationships with his fellows on earth as well as with the Father in heaven.

Nevertheless, the kingdom idea really never got much past the locus of “true believers” over the past two thousand years and that is now inhibiting a fuller understanding of the message. It would seem the purpose of why this network of personality relationships ought to be spiritualized before it could ever possibly be realized is paramount. Purpose precedes strategy; strategy comes before tactics. The brotherhood needs a spiritual culture to be in place as well as the intellectual understanding of the universe infrastructure that is in place already to get in high gear. I am not exactly sure which comes first.

We are advised that a religious revelation “*is essential to the realization of brotherhood on Urantia.*” There is a very interesting statement in the same section of Paper 52 about effecting the brotherhood on this spiritually out-of-sync planet. A Mighty Messenger attached to the staff of Gabriel says: “*The quickest way to realize the brotherhood of man on Urantia is to effect the spiritual transformation of present-day humanity. The only technique for accelerating the natural trend of social evolution is that of applying spiritual pressure from above, thus augmenting moral insight while enhancing the soul capacity of every mortal to understand and love every other mortal. Mutual understanding and fraternal love are transcendent civilizers and mighty factors in the world-wide realization of the brotherhood of man.*” [52:6.7] (P 598)

These words were formalized and indited by 1935. Over seventy years later, I do not see clear signs that humanity really has experienced a transformation based on spiritual pressure from above. I realize that the Christian gospel that descended from the fourth epochal revelation took two thousand years to mature to what it is today, but a quick review of the third and fourth epochal revelations shows that they both attempted to establish a stronger spiritual foundation by which cosmic citizenship could develop.

Melchizedek’s theme was developing the covenant—a relationship—with God by faith and trust. Jesus continued that message with a new revelation about the Father’s fatherly personality and broadened the good news to include love and service. To me, however, Jesus also seems to have advocated greater attention to developing interpersonal relationships, on the understanding that this is an integral part of the spiritual realities that will enable us to build the brotherhood aspects of the kingdom.

Learning along these lines will continue for quite some time during our universe ascent. In the paper entitled “The Seraphic Hosts,” a Melchizedek tells us about the order of supervisor seraphim that are called “Ethical Sensitizers.” He says: “*It is the mission of these seraphim to foster and to promote the growth of creature appreciation of the morality of interpersonal relationships, for such is the seed and secret of the continued and purposeful growth of society and government, human or superhuman. These enhancers of ethical appreciation function anywhere and everywhere they may be of service, as volunteer counselors to the planetary rulers and as exchange teachers on the system training worlds. You will not, however, come under their full guidance until you reach the brotherhood schools on Edentia, where they will quicken your appreciation of those very truths of fraternity which you will even then be so earnestly exploring by the actual experience of living with the univitatia in the social laboratories of Edentia, the seventy satellites of the Norlatiadek capital.*” [39:3.7] (P. 433) (emphasis added).

There are many obvious parallels, such as the Father’s relationships with the Supreme’s relationship with the Trinity, and our relationships with our individual Thought Adjusters. The Thought Adjuster parents our morontia soul, and the cosmic mind contributes to the Supreme’s emerging reality through the network of personality relationships that enable seraphim to minister to us and foster our everyday discovering, recognizing, interpreting, and choosing. In the final analysis, the decisions of human will deliver to the Supreme whatever real spiritual values are created along the way, even if we don’t survive. On the other hand, the actual identity of the Supreme depends on the actions and character development of all finite beings. Thus we can augment our own personality values, and also contribute to the growth of the Supreme, by developing a network of personal relationships that embody logarithmic spiritual development in the network growth

created within the brotherhood. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts; now with this revelation, we can begin to gain an understanding of the why and how.

True religion—personal religion—inspires dynamic service to others, in part, by reorganizing the soul for loyalty and commitment to supreme values. These values become “visible” to us through social, ethical and moral interactions with other personalities that register in superconscious levels of the mind. The entire ministry of the angelic orders seems to be focused on enhancing personal relationships, especially in a spiritual sense.

The Urantia Revelation has challenged us to imagine a better world and seek to put our ideals into practice. Group effort is the only way that this can happen, and the struggle to develop communities is something in which we all participate. Our understanding of our roles in contributing to the evolutionary growth of the Supreme is only one of the key principles of the revelation that encourage us to develop community relationships of a transcendent nature, so that we may be able to see into one another’s souls and do our best to nourish whole-personality growth. A true understanding of Supremacy and all its implications enables us to enhance the individual message of sonship, worship, achievement, and personal salvation by linking all of that to a keen sense of group relationships, spiritual brotherhood, and cosmic consciousness. These ideals express, embody, and facilitate the reality of cosmic citizenship. Bill Sadler, Jr., once said: “...we begin to realize we are a community of souls: those having graduated, those living, and those yet to be born.”

In essence, the process of building the living temple of spiritual fellowship is finding God in your own heart and at the same time discovering God in the hearts of your fellow brothers and sisters. I wish I had been the first to say that, but I found it in the works of Dr. John Lange.⁸ In any case, I believe that this inspiring insight of his gives us a good start toward understanding the essence of Supremacy.

Finally we end on those special words by the Mighty Messenger that provide us inspiration to be something and do something:

The temporal relation of man to the Supreme is the foundation for cosmic morality, the universal sensitivity to, and acceptance of, duty. This is a morality which transcends the temporal sense of relative right and wrong; it is a morality directly predicated on the self-conscious creature’s appreciation of experiential obligation to experiential Deity. Mortal man and all other finite creatures are created out of the living potential of energy, mind, and spirit existent in the Supreme. It is upon the Supreme that the Adjuster-mortal ascender draws for the creation of the immortal and divine character of a finaliter. It is out of the very reality of the Supreme that the Adjuster, with the consent of the human will, weaves the patterns of the eternal nature of an ascending son of God. [117:4.8] (P. 1284)

● *Bob Debold has been reading The Urantia Book since 1975. He began serious study after moving from New Jersey to Washington DC in 1981 and joining John Bullock’s study group in Arlington, Va. Bob has a Masters in organizational management and his seminal published work in this discipline entitled “Performance Management in a Fourth Wave Society, Systemic Measurement, Evaluation, and Incentives for Developing a Holonic Performance Management System” was catalyzed and derivative of the concepts developed by the Perfector of Wisdom in section 7 of the paper “The Universe of Universes.” Bob can be reached at bdebold@deboldgroup.com.*

End Notes:

1. W. Sadler, Jr., *A Study in the Master Universe*, Second Society Foundation, 1968
2. C. Hartshorne, *Philosophers Speak of God*, Humanity Books, 2000
3. A.N. Whitehead, “Process and Reality”, an essay in cosmology, University Cambridge
4. Reflectivity, Wikipedia, 2006
5. C. Hartshorne, “A New World View”, essay, 1976
6. W.E. Hopkins, *Origin and Evolution of Religion*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923
7. R. Debold (1998) “Holonic Systems Management in the Fourth Wave.” *Perspectives*, World Business Academy 12(3) Berrett-Koehler (1998): 43–56
8. Dr. J. Lange, “Spiritual Community: The Quest for Supremacy” Accessed 2006: www.ubfellowship.org/index_fef.htm.

References

- Adler, M. (1980) *How To Think About God A Guide for the 20th-Century Pagan*. Collier Books, NY, NY
- Adler, M. (1993) *The Four Dimensions of Philosophy Metaphysical Moral Objective Categorical*. Collier Books, NY, NY
- Hartshorne, C. (1964) *Man’s Vision of God*. (Reprinted from 1941 original) Harper & Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1955) *What is Philosophy?* Twayne Publishers Inc., (English Translation)
- Peat F. D. (1987) , *Synchronicity: The Bridge Between Matter and Mind*. Bantam, NY, NY.
- Project Gutenberg, (1995) snowy.arsc.alaska.edu/gutenberg/etext95/taote10.txt, accessed 6/20/2006.
- Figure 2 is a graphical representation of the state of the internet as of 11/23/2003. (www.opte.org/maps/)

Correction:

David Nash has requested a correction concerning the article about Urantia University that appeared under his name in the last Fellowship Herald. The article was not written by David Nash alone. It was the collaboration of several dedicated Urantia believers working together on Urantia University and should have been listed as such. He wants to make it clear that he can take very little credit for the article and hopes you will excuse this mistake and know that the project is absolutely a team effort.

Answers to Apostles Quiz

1.k; 2.b; 3.f; 4.h; 5.d; 6.g; 7.i; 8.c; 9.l; 10.a; 11.e; 12.j.

We Are the Creatures Who Carry the Life

We are the creatures who carry the life.
We strive hard to make you your life.
We are your ancestors.

We are the ones who helped make you possible.
You can't live without us.
Did you know that we are the ones who helped you grow?

We started by planting a seed in shallow warm bays
And watched over it for many, many days.
It started to grow big and strong
And then many life forms evolved along.
Then went on to shore in different sizes and shapes
Including elephants, dolphins, bananas and apes.

We are the ones who carry the life.
We are the ones who strive hard to make the life.
And do you know what happened next?
It turned pretty complex.
Life continued to grow bigger and bigger
Until the world was covered with animals
Grazing, running, jumping and playing.

Then something magical happened.
Monkeys started walking on two legs
And turned into these human like creatures
With many features
Who lived in caves.

Soon they started to grow and evolve
Then they built houses and cars and bars.
Then many of them came
And started making cities, rockets and trains.
They made TV's, movies and all kinds of crazy stuff,
Books and cartoons and I don't know what.

We moved on to another planet
They had lives of their own
This is how far time has gone along.
Please ask no more, it's the end of my song.

By Adam's Aon Lawrence, age 9

The Urantia Book Fellowship
P.O. Box 4583
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163 USA

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 3142
Portland, OR

