

## Study guide

# Fostering the progressive growth of human society & civilization The unceasing campaign of the master seraphim

**Paper 114, section 6:** “The master seraphim of planetary supervision”  
[pages 1254–1256 in the single-column edition published by Urantia Foundation]

**Author:** the Chief of Seraphim, a primary supernaphim of Paradise

(If this study guide is used as the framework for a group discussion, the best way to start would be for participants to read the material aloud.)

## Origin

**1.** In section II of the Foreword, a Divine Counselor states: “GOD is a word symbol designating all personalizations of Deity” [3:19 / 0:2.3]. He subsequently explains that when the authors of *The Urantia Book* use the word GOD, it has seven possible meanings — including “God the Spirit” (meaning number 3) and “God the Supreme” (meaning number 4). On balance, it seems very logical to associate the work of the master seraphim with both of these meanings of the word GOD. In your view, does the association of the master seraphim with God the Spirit appear to be more significant and more intense than their association with God the Supreme? Alternately, are you inclined to reach the opposite conclusion, so as to emphasize their association with God the Supreme? As yet another possibility, do you appraise these two relationships as being equally important? In any case, please explain your reasons.

**2.** In the section of Paper 38 that is entitled, “Angelic natures,” a Melchizedek declares: “Though seraphim are very affectionate and sympathetic beings, they are not sex-emotion creatures. ... Nevertheless, in dealing with sex creatures it is our custom to speak of those beings of more direct descent from the Father and the Son as the sons of God, while referring to the children of the Spirit as the daughters of God. Angels are, therefore, commonly designated by feminine pronouns on the sex planets” [a Melchizedek, 419:2 / 38:2.2]. In other words, we should say *she* or *her* when we are referring to any seraphim, not *he* or *him*.

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This study guide is mainly intended as an armchair or desktop document, in the hope that it will stimulate personal study and reflection by committed readers of *The Urantia Book*. Nonetheless, the study guide can also serve as the framework for a group discussion, provided that the contents are used selectively. Since the first three questions are conceptual and rather abstract, it may be best for a group of committed readers to start with question 4.

- a. Does it then become appropriate for us to understand the work of the master seraphim from some of the perspectives that have traditionally been considered feminine (for example, a disposition to serve, assist, and support without manifesting an active effort to direct, dominate, or control)? If this interpretation seems persuasive, please analyze the implications for the ways the master seraphim work with human beings. If, on the other hand, you disagree with the conclusion stated above, please explain your own interpretation of the master seraphim's methods.
- b. Do the factors we have just discussed harmonize with the premise that the master seraphim, like the guardian seraphim, are required to respect human choices and decisions? After all, a Mighty Messenger tells us: "Man does not have unfettered free will; there are limits to his range of choice, but within the radius of this choice his will is relatively sovereign" [*a Mighty Messenger*, 1303:3 / 118:9.2]. Further, the Chief of Seraphim states: "Neither angels nor any other order of universe personality have power or authority to curtail or abridge the prerogatives of human choosing" [1246:0 / 113:5.1]. Given these understandings, what techniques can the master seraphim use in order to inspire, influence, or attract a human being toward methods and approaches that may help upgrade the existing practices of humanity associated with a particular material, mindal, or spiritual context?

**3.** In Paper 27, "Ministry of the Primary Supernaphim," a Perfectioner of Wisdom states:

Primary supernaphim are also placed in command of the seraphic hosts ministering on worlds isolated because of rebellion. When a Paradise Son is bestowed upon such a world, completes his mission, ascends to the Universal Father, is accepted, and returns as the accredited deliverer of this isolated world, a primary supernaphim is always designated by the chiefs of assignment to assume command of the ministering spirits on duty in the newly reclaimed sphere. Supernaphim in this special service are periodically rotated. On Urantia the present "chief of seraphim" is the second of this order to be on duty since the times of the bestowal of Christ Michael. [*A Perfectioner of Wisdom*, 298:2 / 27:0.2]

By definition, the chief of seraphim on Urantia commands all seraphim who are native to Nebadon and who are currently serving on our planet. For our purposes, however, the key point is that she presides over the council of the chiefs of the twelve corps of master seraphim, a body that we can describe as the "seraphic planetary government" (*i.e.*, the title of Paper 114). On the other hand, the Chief of Seraphim tells us that the resident governor general exercises general supervision over the activities of the council and, by implication, over the work of all twelve corps of master seraphim [*the Chief of Seraphim*, 1255:1-2 / 114:6.2-3]. Thus her account establishes that the governor general headed the spiritual government of Urantia when Paper 114 was written, and that probably remains the case. Nonetheless, we should not entirely disregard speculation by the author of Paper 93, to the effect that Machiventa Melchizedek may someday appear on Urantia to function as vicegerent Planetary Prince representing Christ Michael [*a Melchizedek*, 1025:2 / 93:10.6]. Even under such circumstances, the twelve corps of master seraphim would undoubtedly continue to be an important and integral part of the spiritual government of our planet.

The Divine Counselor who wrote Paper 17 tells us: “Primary supernaphim originate in the Infinite Spirit” [*a Divine Counselor*, 205:3 / 17:8.2]. In your judgment, why is a primary supernaphim placed in command of the seraphic hosts ministering on a world that is isolated because of rebellion? Are there factors other than her direct descent from the Infinite Spirit that may be influential? Why should she assume these responsibilities only *after* a Paradise Son completes his bestowal on such an isolated world?

**Contextual background.** The spiritual framework that applies to the planet’s mortal inhabitants changes very significantly when a Paradise Son completes his bestowal, for the Spirit of Truth begins to function, and fusion Adjusters are henceforth universally bestowed upon all normal minds of moral status [*a Solitary Messenger*, 1187:2 / 108:2.3].

## History since Pentecost

4. The Chief of Seraphim tells us that the twelve corps of master seraphim arrived on Urantia “concurrent with the outpouring of the Spirit of Truth” [*the Chief of Seraphim*, 1254:7 / 114:6.1]; they accompanied the first governor general, who also assumed his responsibilities at the time of Pentecost. On the other hand, the reserve corps of destiny was operating long before then, for in the immediately following section of the same Paper, the Chief of Seraphim states: “The Urantia reserve corps had its largest membership in the days of the Adamites and Andites, steadily declining with the dilution of the violet blood and reaching its low point around the time of Pentecost, since which time reserve corps membership has steadily increased” [*the Chief of Seraphim*, 1258:4 / 114:7.9]. Although it would be rash to assert that the master seraphim refrain from seeking to influence other human beings or to mobilize their energies and insights, the Chief of Seraphim explicitly states that members of the reserve corps of destiny are attached to the twelve corps of master seraphim [1257:7-8 / 114:7.4-5]. These arrangements, however, were not possible until Pentecost. In addition, it may be useful to recall that until Christ Michael had almost completed his bestowal on Urantia in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth, Caligastia was still the Planetary Prince, at least in a technical sense:

Caligastia was recognized by the Son of Man as the technical Prince of Urantia up to near the time of his death. Said Jesus: “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast down.” And then still nearer the completion of his lifework he announced, “The prince of this world is judged.” And it is this same dethroned and discredited Prince who was once termed “God of Urantia.”

The last act of Michael before leaving Urantia was to offer mercy to Caligastia and Daligastia, but they spurned his tender proffer. Caligastia, your apostate Planetary Prince, is still free on Urantia to prosecute his nefarious designs, but he has absolutely no power to enter the minds of men, neither can he draw near to their souls to tempt or corrupt them unless they really desire to be cursed with his wicked presence.

Before the bestowal of Michael these rulers of darkness sought to maintain their authority on Urantia, and they persistently withstood the minor and subordinate celestial personalities. But since the day of Pentecost this traitorous Caligastia and his equally contemptible

associate, Daligastia, are servile before the divine majesty of the Paradise Thought Adjusters and the protective Spirit of Truth, the spirit of Michael, which has been poured out upon all flesh. [ *Manovandet Melchizedek, 610:1-3 / 53:8.5-7* ]

Neither the Chief of Seraphim nor any other author of *The Urantia Book* tells us how the reserve corps of destiny was administered before the twelve corps of master seraphim arrived on Urantia immediately after the outpouring of the Spirit of Truth, and in the final analysis we simply do not know. There are two possibilities that seem to be logical:

- (1) There were already some master seraphim serving on Urantia but significantly fewer, not organized into twelve corps, and not led by a primary supernaphim; OR
- (2) The planetary government was relying on seraphim who are native to Nebadon, primarily the Planetary Helpers whom a Melchizedek describes in section 5 of Paper 39 [i.e., on pages 436 through 439 of the one-column edition published by Urantia Foundation].

We have considerable information about one such seraphim native to Nebadon: Solonia, a Planetary Helper who advised Adam and Eve in the first Garden, and who wrote Papers 73 through 76. (Solonia belongs to the first group of Planetary Helpers, those who are called “the Voices of the Garden” [a *Melchizedek, 437:2 / 39:5.3*].)

In Paper 74, Solonia describes the work of Adam and Eve in the first Garden before the default. She states: “The moment Adam’s associates began to work outside the Garden, they met the direct and well-planned resistance of Caligastia and Daligastia. The fallen Prince ... was still present on earth and able, at least to some extent, to resist all of Adam’s plans for the rehabilitation of human society” [*Solonia, 833:5 / 74:5.5*]. In contrast, the narrative that Manovandet Melchizedek supplies in Paper 53 (i.e., as cited above) tends to imply that the current work of the master seraphim is not impeded, and perhaps not even affected, by the covert opposition of Caligastia.

- a. During the approximately 35,000 years that elapsed between the default of Adam and Eve and the bestowal of Christ Michael, what strategies could the planetary government adopt in order to reduce and, if possible, overcome interference by Caligastia and Daligastia?
- b. How did the situation change after Pentecost? What additional resources became available?

5. Based on information that the Chief of Seraphim provides in section 6 of Paper 114, it would seem that she and the twelve corps of master seraphim are assigned to Urantia for relatively short periods. The following table summarizes the personnel rotations that have occurred from time to time.

The Chief of Seraphim	2nd primary supernaphim since Pentecost
1. The epochal angels	3rd group since Pentecost
2. The progress angels	2nd group since Pentecost
3. The religious guardians	5th group since Pentecost
4. The angels of nation life	4th group since Pentecost
5. The angels of the races	1st group since Pentecost
6. The angels of the future	1st group since Pentecost
7. The angels of enlightenment	3rd group since Pentecost
8. The angels of health	6th group since Pentecost
9. The home seraphim	5th group since Pentecost
10. The angels of industry	7th group since Pentecost
11. The angels of diversion	3rd group since Pentecost
12. The angels of superhuman ministry	1st group since Pentecost

How do you analyze the rotational patterns summarized above? In your opinion, what factors influence the timing and frequency of personnel rotations?

6. The master seraphim are of course quite distinct from the ordinary, home-and-garden variety *guardian* seraphim who do their best to promote the personal growth and development of individual human beings. To the contrary, we are talking about grizzled veterans, the industrial-strength *master* seraphim who triumphed over many perplexing challenges during their exhilarating ascent to Seraphington, and who were subsequently assigned to one of the superuniverses so they could apply their accumulated wisdom to the situation of an inhabited world (in this case, ours). Nonetheless, it may be possible for the master seraphim to apply the baseline techniques that are used by the guardian seraphim, to the degree that these methods and approaches are appropriate and helpful in any given situation. Alternately, it may be possible for the master seraphim to work

in harmony and close association with the guardians of destiny of a particular human being, to the degree that this cooperation does not in any way interfere with or impede their efforts to promote the personal growth and spiritual destiny of that individual. Here are excerpts from the section in Paper 113 in which the Chief of Seraphim tells us how the guardian seraphim operate:

The guardian seraphim are not mind, though they do spring from the same source that also gives origin to mortal mind, the Creative Spirit. Seraphim are mind stimulators; they continually seek to promote circle-making decisions in human mind. They do this, not as does the Adjuster, operating from within and through the soul, but rather from the outside inward, working through the social, ethical, and moral environment of human beings. ...

Seraphim function as teachers of men by guiding the footsteps of the human personality into paths of new and progressive experiences. To accept the guidance of a seraphim rarely means attaining a life of ease. In following this leading you are sure to encounter, and if you have the courage, to traverse, the rugged hills of moral choosing and spiritual progress. ...

The guarding seraphim is constantly manipulating the mortal environment for the purpose of augmenting the cosmic insight of the human ascender to the end that such a survival candidate may acquire enhanced realization of the presence of the indwelling Adjuster and thus be enabled to yield increased co-operation with the spiritual mission of the divine presence. [ *The Chief of Seraphim, 1245:1,3,4 / 113:4.1,3,4* ]

In comparison, here is what the Chief of Seraphim tells us about the operating methods of the twelve corps of master seraphim:

None of these angelic groups exercise direct or arbitrary control over the domains of their assignment. They cannot fully control the affairs of their respective realms of action, but they can and do so manipulate planetary conditions and so associate circumstances as favorably to influence the spheres of human activity to which they are attached.

The master seraphim of planetary supervision utilize many agencies for the prosecution of their missions. They function as ideational clearinghouses, mind focalizers, and project promoters. While unable to inject new and higher conceptions into human minds, they often act to intensify some higher ideal which has already appeared within a human intellect.

But aside from these many means of positive action, the master seraphim insure planetary progress against vital jeopardy through the mobilization, training, and maintenance of the reserve corps of destiny. The chief function of these reservists is to insure against breakdown of evolutionary progress; they are the provisions which the celestial forces have made against surprise; they are the guarantees against disaster. [ *The Chief of Seraphim, 1256:8-10 / 114:6.18-20* ]

- a. Why might it be advantageous for the master seraphim and the guardian seraphim to work together to foster decisions or actions on the part of a particular individual? Are there conditions or restrictions that would limit or constrain cooperation among seraphim who carry out these very different types of service? If you believe that there are, please describe the limitations you perceive and explain your reasons.



- b. Given the general description of the work of the master seraphim that the Chief of Seraphim provides in the three paragraphs cited above, are you persuaded that they work solely through members of the reserve corps of destiny, or do you believe that they also endeavor to influence certain other human beings? Please identify the phrases or sentences that seem to justify your conclusion, on the understanding that you may wish to explain your view by adding personal interpretations or comments.
- c. If we choose to pursue the hypothesis that the members of the reserve corps of destiny are not the only human beings whom the master seraphim seek to influence, then it becomes intriguing to consider how broadly, or how selectively, they apply their efforts. One would certainly be inclined to postulate that the very specific and intensely challenging mission of the master seraphim compels them to be significantly more selective than the guardian seraphim, whose own assignment patterns are very carefully calibrated:

Human beings in the initial or seventh circle have one guardian angel with one company of assisting cherubim assigned to the watchcare and custody of one thousand mortals. In the sixth circle, a seraphic pair with one company of cherubim is assigned to guide these ascending mortals in groups of five hundred. When the fifth circle is attained, human beings are grouped in companies of approximately one hundred, and a pair of guardian seraphim with a group of cherubim is placed in charge. Upon attainment of the fourth circle, mortal beings are assembled in groups of ten, and again charge is given to a pair of seraphim, assisted by one company of cherubim.

When a mortal mind breaks through the inertia of animal legacy and attains the third circle of human intellectuality and acquired spirituality, a personal angel (in reality two) will henceforth be wholly and exclusively devoted to this ascending mortal. And thus these human souls, in addition to the ever-present and increasingly efficient indwelling Thought Adjusters, receive the undivided assistance of these personal guardians of destiny in all their efforts to finish the third circle, traverse the second, and attain the first. [ *The Chief of Seraphim*, 1242:2-3 / 113:1.7-8 ]

In the final analysis, we simply do not know what criteria the master seraphim would use in order to focus their ministry to human beings who are not members of the reserve corps of destiny. On the other hand, we are certainly entitled to speculate, and the following three statements describe possibilities that seem to be worth considering.

- (1) The master seraphim seek to influence all adult human beings who are actively engaged in some specific field of human endeavor, including the upbringing of children (*a pursuit of intense interest to seraphic corps 9, the home seraphim*).
- (2) The master seraphim seek to influence all adult human beings who have attained the third circle and who are actively engaged in some specific field of human endeavor, including the upbringing of children.
- (3) The master seraphim mainly focus their attention on individuals and groups who are strongly motivated "to make a difference" in a particular field or some other specific context of human life and behavior, provided that these aspirations are at least broadly associated with the progressive growth and development of human society and civilization.

Are you inclined to accept any of these three possibilities described above, either as they stand or by adding your own refinements? Are there other criteria that you believe to be equally relevant or even more persuasive? In any case, please estimate the approximate percentage of persons living on our planet who attract the attention and effort of the master seraphim. Would you describe their strategies as being “elitist”? If you say yes, why do you think so? If you say no, what factors justify your conclusion?

## Destiny during the current millennium

### 7. A Mighty Messenger states:

On an average world the post-Adamic dispensation is an age of great invention, energy control, and mechanical development. This is the era of the appearance of multiform manufacture and the control of natural forces; it is the golden age of exploration and the final subduing of the planet. Much of the material progress of a world occurs during this time of the inauguration of the development of the physical sciences, just such an epoch as Urantia is now experiencing. **Your world is a full dispensation and more behind the average planetary schedule.** [ *A Mighty Messenger*, 593:5 / 52:3.6 / *emphasis added: the sentence highlighted in bold type* ]

A Melchizedek provides a much broader view. In a passage that starts with the phrase “Mechanical inventions,” he highlights material progress on our planet. On the other hand, the Melchizedek makes it clear that science and invention are only one aspect of the myriad challenges confronting the people of Urantia. Therefore he proceeds to call attention to a wide range of intellectual, economic, social, and religious adjustments that appear to be imminent and urgent:

Mechanical inventions and the dissemination of knowledge are modifying civilization; certain economic adjustments and social changes are imperative if cultural disaster is to be avoided. This new and oncoming social order will not settle down complacently for a millennium. The human race must become reconciled to a procession of changes, adjustments, and readjustments. Mankind is on the march toward a new and unrevealed planetary destiny.

Religion must become a forceful influence for moral stability and spiritual progression functioning dynamically in the midst of these ever-changing conditions and never-ending economic adjustments.

Urantia society can never hope to settle down as in past ages. The social ship has steamed out of the sheltered bays of established tradition and has begun its cruise upon the high seas of evolutionary destiny; and the soul of man, as never before in the world's history, needs carefully to scrutinize its charts of morality and painstakingly to observe the compass of religious guidance. The paramount mission of religion as a social influence is to stabilize the ideals of mankind during these dangerous times of transition from one phase of civilization to another, from one level of culture to another. [ *A Melchizedek*, 1086:4-6 / 99:1.1-3 ]



In much the same vein, an Archangel of Nebadon comments on the daunting implications for the progressive growth and development of human society, while warning that wisdom, practical experience, and time are essential elements:

Society is not a divine institution; it is a phenomenon of progressive evolution; and advancing civilization is always delayed when its leaders are slow in making those changes in the social organization which are essential to keeping pace with the scientific developments of the age. For all that, things must not be despised just because they are old, neither should an idea be unconditionally embraced just because it is novel and new.

Man should be unafraid to experiment with the mechanisms of society. But always should these adventures in cultural adjustment be controlled by those who are fully conversant with the history of social evolution; and always should these innovators be counseled by the wisdom of those who have had practical experience in the domains of contemplated social or economic experiment. *No great social or economic change should be attempted suddenly.* Time is essential to all types of human adjustment — physical, social, or economic. Only moral and spiritual adjustments can be made on the spur of the moment, and even these require the passing of time for the full outworking of their material and social repercussions. The ideals of the race are the chief support and assurance during the critical times when civilization is in transit from one level to another. [ *An Archangel, 911:4-5 / 81:6.39-40* ]

- a. How do the master seraphim balance the many complex factors that the Mighty Messenger, the Melchizedek, and the Archangel identified in the three passages excerpted above? Since it is quite reasonable to believe that the various corps of master seraphim adopt different approaches to this question of balance, choose two specific corps and describe how their methods may be somewhat different.
- b. In regard to the master seraphim in general, or in regard to any specific corps that you choose to focus on, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of a comprehensive strategy that would evolve from time to time, as opposed to just formulating a relatively small number of specific goals and objectives, achieving them, and proceeding to identify other targets of opportunity that may then have emerged?
- c. In the third passage cited above, the Archangel tells us that “adventures in cultural adjustment” should always “be controlled by those who are fully conversant with the history of social evolution,” and that innovators should “be counseled by the wisdom of those who have had practical experience in the domains of contemplated social or economic experiment.” Do you believe that the influence of the master seraphim is sufficiently effective to ensure those outcomes? If so, please explain the factors that lead you to that conclusion. If, on the other hand, you believe that the master seraphim can promote these objectives but cannot be certain that human beings will act accordingly, please describe methods of theirs that would serve to encourage and foster these personal relationships among human beings.

**8.** While describing the work of the Trinity Teacher Sons, a Divine Counselor states:

Even in the study of man's biologic evolution on Urantia, there are grave objections to the exclusive historic approach to his present-day status and his current problems. The true perspective of any reality problem — human or divine, terrestrial or cosmic — can be had only by the full and unprejudiced study and correlation of three phases of universe reality: origin, history, and destiny. The proper understanding of these three experiential realities affords the basis for a wise estimate of the current status. [ *A Divine Counselor*, 215:3 / 19:1.6 ]

Although the Divine Counselor's comments are not specifically directed toward the work of the master seraphim, and although the master seraphim are daughters of the Infinite Spirit instead of Sons of the Paradise Trinity, it is more than reasonable to conclude that during their arduous ascent to Seraphington, they received intensive training in the threefold principle that the Divine Counselor describes (namely origin, history, and destiny). In your opinion, how do the master seraphim apply this principle in the course of their patient, persistent, and disciplined campaign aimed at influencing human beings on Urantia? How do they overcome a tendency among many current inhabitants of our planet to focus predominantly — or even almost exclusively — on events of the last three months and those expected to occur during the next two weeks?

**9.** In explaining and appraising the Lucifer Rebellion, a Mighty Messenger declares:

Most of the liberties which Lucifer sought he already had; others he was to receive in the future. All these precious endowments were lost by giving way to impatience and yielding to a desire to possess what one craves now and to possess it in defiance of all obligation to respect the rights and liberties of all other beings composing the universe of universes. Ethical obligations are innate, divine, and universal. [ *A Mighty Messenger*, 616:3 / 54:4.4 ]

When Solonia analyzes the default of Adam and Eve, she states:

In estimating the results of the Adamic mission on your world, justice demands the recognition of the condition of the planet. Adam was confronted with a well-nigh hopeless task when, with his beautiful mate, he was transported from Jerusem to this dark and confused planet. But had they been guided by the counsel of the Melchizedeks and their associates, and *had they been more patient*, they would have eventually met with success. But Eve listened to the insidious propaganda of personal liberty and planetary freedom of action. She was led to experiment with the life plasm of the material order of sonship in that she allowed this life trust to become prematurely commingled with that of the then mixed order of the original design of the Life Carriers which had been previously combined with that of the reproducing beings once attached to the staff of the Planetary Prince. [ *Solonia*, 846:3 / 75:8.4 ]

Thus it seems quite reasonable to conclude that impatience played a key role in the exceedingly painful misadventures that marred the early history of our planet: the abject failures of the first two epochal revelations. Are the master seraphim compelled to overcome a craving for “instant gratification” — or, perhaps, a desire for “rapid and substantial improvements in my lifetime” — among committed readers of *The Urantia Book* or among other inhabitants of our planet Urantia? If we assume that endemic impatience really is an issue and perhaps an obstacle, what could the master seraphim

do to neutralize or deflect it? In your opinion, how does the question of impatience compare with other challenges that the master seraphim must endeavor to overcome? If you believe that other difficulties are more important and more notable, please identify and analyze them.

**10.** In Paper 134, immediately before the Midwayer Commission proceeds to summarize and adapt the ideas that Jesus presented during his lectures at Urmia, the Midwayer Commission describes an extended controversy that pitted the seraphim of the churches against the seraphim of progress:

[When we, the midwayers, first prepared the summary of Jesus' teachings at Urmia, there arose a disagreement between the seraphim of the churches and the seraphim of progress as to the wisdom of including these teachings in the Urantia Revelation. Conditions of the twentieth century, prevailing in both religion and human governments, are so different from those prevailing in Jesus' day that it was indeed difficult to adapt the Master's teachings at Urmia to the problems of the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of men as these world functions are existent in the twentieth century. We were never able to formulate a statement of the Master's teachings which was acceptable to both groups of these seraphim of planetary government. Finally, the Melchizedek chairman of the revelatory commission appointed a commission of three of our number to prepare our view of the Master's Urmia teachings as adapted to twentieth-century religious and political conditions on Urantia. Accordingly, we three secondary midwayers completed such an adaptation of Jesus' teachings, restating his pronouncements as we would apply them to present-day world conditions, and we now present these statements as they stand after having been edited by the Melchizedek chairman of the revelatory commission.] [ *The Midwayer Commission*, 1486:3 / 134:3.8 ]

This account of sincere differences amidst respect for the viewpoints of others is entirely in keeping with the broad themes of diversity, pluralism, and mutual respect that characterize and permeate the revelation. The revelators did not promote uniformity by writing anonymously and collectively. To the contrary, each author fostered diversity by identifying himself or herself, usually by telling us the category of beings to which he or she belongs rather than by giving a personal name.

Nonetheless, many current readers have adopted the unfortunate habit of introducing quotations by declaring, "*The Urantia Book* says ... ." In effect, this method of speaking and writing implicitly amounts to claiming that the fifth epochal revelation embodies only a single, uniform viewpoint. Since it does not, there appear to be sound reasons for wondering whether that tacit assertion of monolithic uniformity conflicts with the fundamental spirit of the teachings, perhaps even undermining a key characteristic that distinguishes *The Urantia Book* from previous works that were considered revealed or inspired.

Throughout *The Urantia Book*, the authors treat situations that involve a range of opinions and beliefs as being entirely natural or even desirable.

The Universal Father has an eternal purpose pertaining to the material, intellectual, and spiritual phenomena of the universe of universes, which he is executing throughout all time. God created the universes of his own free and sovereign will, and he created them in accordance with his all-wise and eternal purpose. It is doubtful whether anyone except the Paradise Deities and their highest associates really knows very much about the eternal purpose of God. Even the exalted citizens of Paradise hold very diverse opinions about the nature of the eternal purpose of the Deities. [ *A Divine Counselor*, 54:1 / 4:0.1 ]

The Unqualified Absolute is functionally limited to space, but we are not so sure about the relation of this Absolute to motion. Is motion inherent therein? We do not know. We know that motion is not inherent in space; even the motions of space are not innate. But we are not so sure about the relation of the Unqualified to motion. Who, or what, is really responsible for the gigantic activities of force-energy transmutations now in progress out beyond the borders of the present seven superuniverses? Concerning the origin of motion we have the following opinions:

1. We think the Conjoint Actor initiates motion *in* space.
2. If the Conjoint Actor produces the motions *of* space, we cannot prove it.
3. The Universal Absolute does not originate initial motion but does equalize and control all of the tensions originated by motion. [ *A Perfector of Wisdom*, 133:4-7 / 12:4.2-5 ]

The higher a creature's education, the more respect he has for the knowledge, experience, and opinions of others. [ *One High in Authority*, 278:3 / 25:3.12 ]

We deem that human beings are entitled to share our opinions, and that you are free to conjecture with us respecting the mystery of the ultimate destiny of the Paradise Corps of Finality. It seems evident to us that the present assignments of the perfected evolutionary creatures partake of the nature of postgraduate courses in universe understanding and superuniverse administration; and we all ask, "Why should the Gods be so concerned in so thoroughly training surviving mortals in the technique of universe management?" [ *Divine Counselor and One Without Name and Number*, 348:5 / 31:3.8 ]

Just as certainly as men share their religious beliefs, they create a religious group of some sort which eventually creates common goals. Someday religionists will get together and actually effect co-operation on the basis of unity of ideals and purposes rather than attempting to do so on the basis of psychological opinions and theological beliefs. Goals rather than creeds should unify religionists. [ *A Melchizedek*, 1091:6 / 99:5.7 ]

Some believe that Machiventa will not come to take personal direction of Urantian affairs until the end of the current dispensation. Others hold that the vicegerent Prince may not come, as such, until Michael sometime returns to Urantia as he promised when still in the flesh. Still others, including this narrator, look for Melchizedek's appearance any day or hour. [ *The Chief of Seraphim*, 1251:3 / 114:1.4 ]

No one knows how long these twenty-four Urantia counselors will continue in their present status, detached from the regular program of universe activities. They will no doubt continue to serve in their present capacities until some change in planetary status ensues, such as the end of a dispensation, the assumption of full authority by Machiventa Melchizedek, the final adjudication of the Lucifer rebellion, or the reappearance of Michael on the world of his final bestowal. The present resident governor general of Urantia seems inclined to the opinion that all but Machiventa may be released for Paradise ascension the moment the system of Satania is restored to the constellation circuits. But other opinions are also current. [ *The Chief of Seraphim*, 1252:4 / 114:2.6 ]

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. [ *A Mighty Messenger*, 1268:5 / 116:0.5 ]

These twenty-four men had a truly remarkable experience these two weeks when they were compelled to face problems and compose difficulties without Jesus. They learned to differ, to debate, to contend, to pray, and to compromise, and throughout it all to remain sympathetic with the other person's viewpoint and to maintain at least some degree of tolerance for his honest opinions. [ *The Midwayer Commission*, 1625:8 / 144:6.11 ]

The religions of authority can only divide men and set them in conscientious array against each other; the religion of the spirit will progressively draw men together and cause them to become understandingly sympathetic with one another. The religions of authority require of men uniformity in belief, but this is impossible of realization in the present state of the world. The religion of the spirit requires only unity of experience — uniformity of destiny — making full allowance for diversity of belief. The religion of the spirit requires only uniformity of insight, not uniformity of viewpoint and outlook. The religion of the spirit does not demand uniformity of intellectual views, only unity of spirit feeling. The religions of authority crystallize into lifeless creeds; the religion of the spirit grows into the increasing joy and liberty of ennobling deeds of loving service and merciful ministrations. [ *The Midwayer Commission*, 1732:2 / 155:6.9 ]

- a. As the master seraphim work with human beings, endeavoring to influence them toward decisions and actions that will lead to the progressive growth of human society and civilization, how can they also seek to promote diversity, pluralism, and mutual respect?
- b. Given the millennium of “changes, adjustments, and readjustments” that a Melchizedek predicts in Paper 99 [1086:4-6 / 99:1.1-3 / the three paragraphs that were cited in question 7], it is reasonable to believe that actions and measures will come and go, and that a particular step that is appropriate and useful in one region of the world may be premature or disadvantageous in another. And since the progressive growth of human society and civilization is more likely to be complex and uneven than simple, straightforward, and direct, no one can predict the specific steps that will be appropriate and necessary in each field of human life while society repeatedly regenerates itself over the next thousand years. On the other hand, the process of creativity and innovation must and will persist, and that will be the case in every region of the world throughout the entire millennium.

Since the master seraphim received extensive training during their arduous ascent to Seraphington, it seems entirely appropriate to believe that they are far more familiar

with the process of social and cultural evolution than we are. Even though this process is undoubtedly quite different from biological evolution, intriguing observations by a Life Carrier may stimulate useful comparisons and analogies.

It will hardly be possible to explain to the present-day human mind many of the queer and apparently grotesque occurrences of early evolutionary progress. A purposeful plan was functioning throughout all of these seemingly strange evolutions of living things, but we are not allowed arbitrarily to interfere with the development of the life patterns after they have once been set in operation.

Life Carriers may employ every possible natural resource and may utilize any and all fortuitous circumstances which will enhance the developmental progress of the life experiment, but we are not permitted mechanically to intervene in, or arbitrarily to manipulate the conduct and course of, either plant or animal evolution. [ *A Life Carrier*, 733:7-8 / 65:3.1-2 ]

It was our intention to produce an early manifestation of will in the evolutionary life of Urantia, and we succeeded. Ordinarily, will does not emerge until the colored races have long been in existence, usually first appearing among the superior types of the red man. Your world is the only planet in Satania where the human type of will has appeared in a precolored race.

But in our effort to provide for that combination and association of inheritance factors which finally gave rise to the mammalian ancestors of the human race, we were confronted with the necessity of permitting hundreds and thousands of other and comparatively useless combinations and associations of inheritance factors to take place. Many of these seemingly strange by-products of our efforts are certain to meet your gaze as you dig back into the planetary past, and I can well understand how puzzling some of these things must be to the limited human viewpoint. [ *A Life Carrier*, 736:2-3 / 65:4.11-12 ]

It is clear that the limitations that constrained the Life Carriers cannot apply to the master seraphim in exactly the same ways. To be sure, the Life Carriers were “not permitted mechanically to intervene in, or arbitrarily to manipulate the conduct and course of, either plant or animal evolution,” but it is important to remember that the Life Carriers were operating in the physical realm (matter), whereas the master seraphim are operating in mind. In practice, the master seraphim “function as ideational clearinghouses, mind focalizers, and project promoters,” and they “often act to intensify some higher ideal which has already appeared within a human intellect” [ *the Chief of Seraphim*, 1256:9 / 114:6.19 ].

Do you therefore believe that these capabilities of theirs are so potent and so effective as to eliminate the possibility that humanity will encounter “hundreds and thousands of ... comparatively useless combinations and associations” while society evolves during the next thousand years? On the other hand, do you suspect that the sovereignty and unpredictability of the human will — and the consequent vagaries of human choices and decisions — will engender an ample collection of “comparatively useless combinations and associations,” and that these outcomes are so likely as to be essentially unavoidable? If so, are there strategies that the master seraphim should adopt in order to diminish this wasted motion and unproductive churning?



## Optional role play

### Events

1. The moderator introduces the topic and describes the steps. Participants then take turns reading section 6 of Paper 114 out loud.
2. After participants divide into small groups, each group assumes the roles and responsibilities of a specific corps of master seraphim. The initial task is to develop goals that are closely associated with the corresponding fields of human life and experience. *(The moderator may wish to allot 15 minutes, depending on how much time is available for the entire role play.)*
3. The moderator calls on someone from each group who describes the goals that the group discussed. The moderator will probably wish to comment, but should do so as tactfully as possible. In any case, participants from the other groups should also have an opportunity to react before the moderator calls on a person from the next group.
4. The second task is for each group to develop strategies for achieving the goals it developed earlier. *(The time allotted might be 10 minutes, depending on the overall schedule.)*
5. The moderator calls on someone from each group who describes the strategies it discussed. Once again, the moderator reacts as may seem appropriate and gives other participants the opportunity to comment.
6. The role play concludes with an opportunity for questions and answers, followed by the moderator's final remarks.

### Circumstances & overtones

- a. The role play works best in gatherings of 25 to 40 people, for events on this scale permit four small groups of six to ten participants. This enables each person to view the work of the master seraphim from four different perspectives.
- b. A gathering of 12 people represents the bare minimum (*i.e.*, two small groups of six participants). The role play should not be attempted with fewer people, because such an event would not provide an adequate opportunity for multiple interactions and diverse outcomes — important characteristics that make the role play stimulating and memorable.
- c. The entire exercise should last between 75 and 90 minutes, and the moderator must keep it moving. A slow and labored pace would produce fatigue and boredom instead of useful experience and intriguing insights.

- d. Developing goals is definitely a challenge, but developing strategies is even more difficult. This is mainly because we know comparatively little about how the master seraphim operate.
- e. The master seraphim must formulate goals and strategies for our entire planet, whereas six to ten participants who have not done extensive research will seldom be able to transcend the circumstances of their upbringing and environment. The moderator should call attention to this issue, for participants cannot understand the work of the master seraphim unless they become acutely aware of the need for a global perspective.
- f. Experience demonstrates that the following four corps of master seraphim are the most appropriate choices: seraphic corps 4 (the angels of nation life); seraphic corps 7 (the angels of enlightenment); seraphic corps 8 (the angels of health); and seraphic corps 9 (the home seraphim).

*[NOTE: In contrast, it would be counterproductive for a small group to be assigned the roles and responsibilities of seraphic corps 3 (the religious guardians). This is because discussion of their responsibilities among committed readers of The Urantia Book almost invariably centers on the best methods for promoting interest in the revelation. Although that topic is exceedingly interesting, it does not sum up the full range of the responsibilities of the religious guardians. Further, it does not provide a representative sample that will help participants reach a broad understanding of the work of the master seraphim.]*

- g. The key objective is to enable participants to immerse themselves in the work of the master seraphim during a “hands-on” personal experience. In comparison, the goals and strategies that the small groups develop are considerably less important.

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March 22, 2011

Derwood, Maryland, U.S.A.

## The Global Endeavor

The Global Endeavor is an entirely independent project that will provide a new option that may be attractive to readers of *The Urantia Book* who would like to serve others in the spirit of the master seraphim. The path of idealistic service described in the plan will operate in parallel to study groups and in parallel to social organizations. This new path is neither a substitute nor a competitor, and it will require a very different kind of active engagement.

The underlying objective is to foster the progressive growth and development of human society, mainly by seeking to promote and encourage the process of imagination, innovation, and creativity that will be a pervasive and enduring theme throughout the next thousand years of life on our planet. As a Solitary Messenger states: "The advances of true civilization are all born in this inner world of mankind. It is only the inner life that is truly creative" [1220:3 / 111:4.4].

As of this writing (March 2011), the Global Endeavor is still in its formative stages. The many documents that describe the endeavor have been translated into French, and they are currently being translated into Spanish. On the other hand, members of the committee that is sponsoring the Global Endeavor believe that it will take at least another few years before circumstances will become appropriate to convene the founding convention that will bring the endeavor to life.

In the meantime, the committee encourages readers of *The Urantia Book* who wish to learn more — and who may wish to serve and assist their fellow human beings in the spirit of the master seraphim — to take an active interest. Readers can start doing that by downloading documents that are readily available on the committee's modest website, <http://www.globalendeavor.net> .