

the Fellowship Herald

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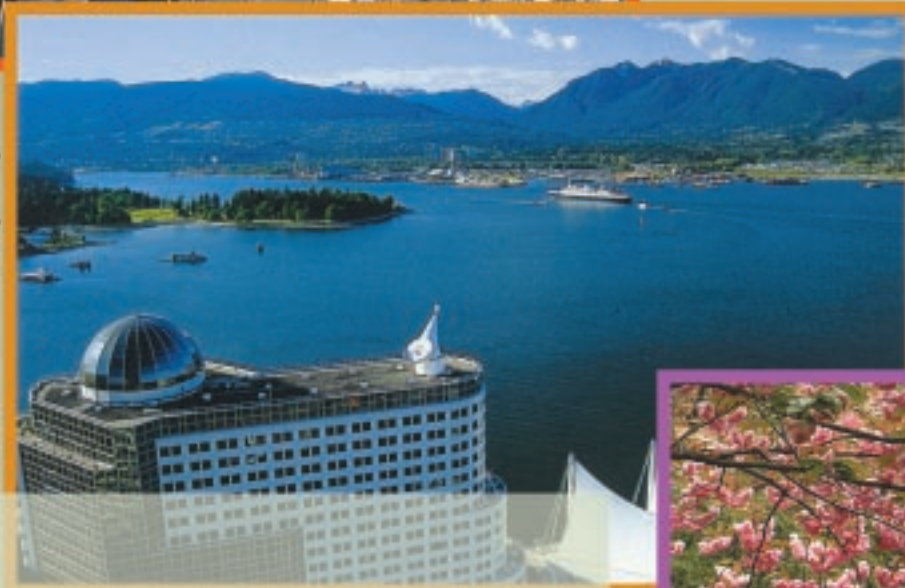


IC 99

August 7 - 12, 1999

Vancouver, Canada

Photos Douglas Leighton



Dear Friends,

There is still time for you to register for SpiritQuest 2000, the Fellowship's 1999 International Conference. This 6 day event (August 7 - 12, 1999) features a wide range of activities for all readers of *The Urantia Book* and their families. Over 70 different presentations and discussion groups are planned, covering the full and diverse range of *Urantia Book* interests. A separate, full featured and professionally staffed program has been designed for all children, from toddlers through teens. Plus, each day will offer diverse group worship opportunities and a wide variety of entertainment and recreation options. Most important, SpiritQuest 2000 will provide you with an opportunity for fellowship with over 1000 *Urantia Book* students from all over the world.

We sincerely hope you will be able to join with us for this great Urantian celebration at the beautiful campus of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. If so, please tear out, complete, and return the conference registration form (the last two pages of *The Fellowship Herald*) as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you this summer!

In Fellowship,
Steve Dreier
IC99 Conference Chair



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Changing Woman

Vincent Ventola 1948 - 1991.

A long time believer in *The Urantia Book*, an artist, writer and loving husband and father.

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THE CHALLENGE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Meredith J. Sprunger - Ft. Wayne, IN

(The following presentation was given at the Midwest Regional Conference held at Fall Creek, Illinois State Park, October 7 & 8, 1995.)

We are living in one of the major turning points of history. Our times have been labeled variously as the post-industrial, post-modern, and post-Christian era. The traditional paradigms of cosmology, value, and reality have lost their unquestioned relevance and authority among contemporary people. The social institutions which were structured by these traditional concepts and values are deteriorating in vitality and influence. The economic and political infrastructures of society are breaking down and losing their credibility and effectiveness. The mores that have been the foundation of human behavior and ethical standards in society are crumbling, and immorality, crime, and violence are endemic. Religious institutions that were once the central pillars of society are now relegated to a peripheral position.

As we face the twenty-first century, there are numerous scientific-technical innovations which will revolutionize the way we live. Computers and computer technology are changing the way we handle information and communication. Microbiology is opening a vast po-

tential for altering living organisms. Recombinant DNA technology makes it possible to restructure both plants and animals and produce a variety of drugs, industrial lubricants, and enzymes. Human applications will range from predicting inherited genetic diseases to applying gene therapy for correcting genetic disorders. The new physics is radically changing our conception of the nature of material reality. We are, literally, being ushered into a new world of potential development.

Among the many problems that we face, the material-environmental, economic, and political difficulties are much easier to cope with than the personal-spiritual and social-cultural problems. Our industrial-technological civilization has broken up the small communities which were indigenous to the agricultural society and isolated the individual in specialization and urbanization. The advent of the computer has accelerated this separation and seclusion. The sense of community and the extended family are greatly diminished. Even the segregated industrial-business groups and the nuclear family exist in relative cultural isolation. This detachment and isolation contributes to the deterioration of family and community influence. The inherent human hunger for community and belonging causes young people to join gangs with territorial-defensive agendas and motivates adults to affiliate with ideological and religious groups with exclusive-restrictive boundaries.

At the root of the breakdown of individual behavior, the deterioration and malaise of our social institutions, and the failure of our religious institutions to satisfy our spiritual hunger and inspire our creativity is that our civilization is trying to draw resources and energy from a horse and buggy paradigm of reality which has lost its relevance and serviceability. There are diverse and confused views of reality in today's world. Many scientifically oriented people have a materialistic-positivistic understanding of life. Most religionists have a simplistic view of spiritual cosmology that does not harmonize with

Dear Readers:

Welcome to the second issue of The Fellowship Herald. Thanks to all of you who have sent us your letters of encouragement in response to the first. This semi annual publication of *The Urantia Book* Fellowship is designed to bring you articles and other material that the editors consider to be of interest to readers of *The Urantia Book*. In keeping with our intent to have a wide diversity of viewpoints represented in this publication, we would like to remind you that your comments would be most welcome. Letters to the editor may be published in future editions. While we may not be able to publish all of the letters we receive, we would like to publish some, especially those that are likely to be thought provoking.

We are also interested in including artwork in future issues. While we have no specific ideas in that regard, we will be looking for work of high quality which is consistent with the "spirit" of the publication. Artwork will be printed in black and white so please keep this in mind when you send it in.

Whether or not any submission is published shall be at the discretion of the editors and subject to space considerations.

The Editors

our astronomical view of the cosmos. And a great portion of society are confused about what to believe. The basic dilemma of our times is that we have no unifying conception of reality.

The singular ingredient which will bring meaning and unity into planetary existence is an inspiring paradigm of reality which will harmonize science, philosophy, and religion and inspire humankind to strive for common goals and objectives. Only a new and enlarged revelatory vision of reality has the potential of doing this. Hopefully, the searchers of our world will discover the Fifth Epochal Revelation in the twenty-first century. *The Urantia Book* is the only source of reality that is large enough and spiritually empowering enough to unify and energize the entire planet. Enculturating the world with the inspiring and ennobling teachings of the Fifth Epochal Revelation is the challenge of the twenty-first century!

THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM

Where does one start in healing our ailing society? At the heart of the many problems of contemporary society is the failure of the individual to experience a meaningful relationship with spiritual reality that initiates and sustains a dedication to truth, beauty, and goodness. The individual fails to experience this relationship because the source of our introduction to spiritual reality in contemporary culture lacks credibility. It is not an integral part of our educational exposure to the complex modern world in which we live.

Two basic changes need to occur in the twenty-first century to overcome this educational deficiency. First, our culture needs to discover the Fifth Epochal Revelation, which will give us the expanded picture of spiritual reality that harmonizes with our scientific-technological society and unifies science, philosophy, and religion. Secondly, our entire educational system needs to be redesigned. Philosophy and spiritual values need to be integrated into the humanities educational curriculum and taught from kindergarten through college. Of almost equal importance, the educational curriculum must be restructured to involve pupils in "real life." Just as education in the agriculture society required working in farming activities, so must we involve pupils in the real world very early in their educational experience. Education should not be a preliminary exercise to real life, but a continuing activity throughout life.

The teachings of *The Urantia Book* are tailor-made for the problems of the twenty-first century. Not only does it present a paradigm of reality that unifies science, philosophy, and religion, but it emphasizes the importance of family and community life. Its picture of planetary life

as the foundation of an ongoing career of personality and spiritual growth provides strong motivation for contemporary growth and achievement and an inspiring vision of the endless adventure of eternity. Young people are challenged to actualize their potentialities and those who are disillusioned in middleage are assured that personality and spiritual development is more important than worldly success. The elderly are encouraged to continue growing and given a vision of the potentials of a renewed body and an improved mind at the next level of existence. Those who find themselves isolated and lonely learn that they are never alone. The indwelling presence of their Thought Adjuster and guardian angels provides a sense of community. The extensive wisdom shared concerning economic, political, and religious institutions will serve as an antidote for the ills of our troubled society. Finally, the life and teachings of Jesus will inspire all people to seek fulfillment in the religion of Jesus: the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

THE ASCENDANCY OF THE FIFTH EPOCHAL REVELATION

During the first forty years of its history, the Urantia movement has evolved from a handful of readers in Chicago to hundreds of study groups and tens of thousands of readers throughout the world. Without mass publicity or promotion, over 400,000 copies of *The Urantia Book* have been sold and translations are available in French, Spanish, Finnish, Russian and Dutch. A vast amount of information about the Urantia Papers is available on the Internet. Audio and computer versions of the book are available and numerous study aids have been published. Regional and International Conferences are being held, and secondary works are proliferating.

All this is impressive but of much greater importance is the tempering and structuring of the Urantia movement in preparation for its world-wide mission. The rugged struggle of these early years has established solid foundations for carrying a new paradigm of spiritual reality to humankind. The Urantia movement very early in its history has encountered most of the challenges that have threatened religious transitions down through history. We have received an experiential vaccination against these viruses which have threatened creative spiritual growth in the past. The Fifth Epochal Revelation has demonstrated its dynamic and power in steering the movement repeatedly through critical periods and controversial encounters in our journey.

The Urantia movement has been confronted by centralized organizational control and we have witnessed the power of individual initiative and creative diversity to establish a pluralistic foundation for outreach minis-

try. We have escaped oligarchical-authoritarian direction in the triumph of participatory democracy and openness. We weathered the threat of legalistic-power strategies through the dominance of cooperative team work.

Soon after regional and national conferences were held, students of *The Urantia Book* were captivated and challenged by the intrigues of charismatic control of the Urantia movement. With the passing of time, we recognized the danger of charismatic influence and witnessed the emergence of evolutionary-rational decision-making. On the heels of this tempering experience, we were confronted by a more subtle form of charismatic influence in the captivating channeling movement among readers of *The Urantia Book*. Following the example of the Christian church in dealing with similar movements in its history, we have achieved the spiritual maturity to allow individual freedom to evaluate the authenticity of spiritual experience.

We are now entering the intellectual-spiritual struggle which took mainline Christianity centuries to largely resolve: distinguishing between the contemporary, fallible human carrier concepts used in revelation from its eternal spiritual truths. Martin Gardner's book, *Urantia: The Great Cult Mystery*, may help to shorten this period in the Urantia movement. It may also help to guard against cult attitudes among those who have living faith in the enlarged spiritual truths of the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

The solid core of the Urantia movement has come through these tribulations with renewed dedication and

balance. We have come of age. Spiritual freedom and participatory democracy have taught us that there can be unity of purpose in the midst of intellectual and political diversity. The Fifth Epochal Revelation will make its way and overcome any barriers placed in its way. We are standing at the threshold of "one of the most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment" on our planet. The preliminary, orienting growth developments of the Urantia movement are largely behind us. The Most Highs have prepared us and our planet for the most thrilling vision of spiritual reality since Jesus of Nazareth walked on our world. This outreach mission will be many-faceted, pluralistic, and victorious!

Meredith Justin Sprunger is a minister in the United Church of Christ and a college professor, now retired from pastoral and teaching responsibilities. For many years he was active as a counselor and psychological consultant, holding a Private Practice Certificate in Psychology in the State of Indiana. He has served congregations in the Midwest and taught at Elmhurst College and Indiana Institute of Technology, functioning as head of the Department of Psychology, chairman of the Division of Liberal Arts, and President.

Meredith has served as a Field Representative, chairman of the Education and Fraternal Relations Committees, and President of Urantia Brotherhood. He is founder and Executive Director of The Christian Fellowship of Students of The Urantia Book, a trustee of the Jesusonian Foundation, and editor of The Spiritual Fellowship Journal.

ON FACING MILLENNIAL CHANGE

Byron Belitsos, Navato, CA

With the end of the millennium upon us and the Y2K crisis imminent, the word "apocalypse" is going to be essential in everyone's lexicon, especially the media. Originally – biblically – the term apocalypse meant a revealing of secrets, an "unveiling" of hidden truths. "Apocalyptic millennialism" – an impossible phrase for the media to pronounce glibly (and thus much less overused) – refers to the unveiling of the hidden secrets of times, at the end of historical time – more specifically at a millenium's end. In the end-times, as the apocalyptic millennialist tale goes, evil and suffering – all the things and people one finds insufferable – will finally come to a decisive end in a new and undreamed-of Utopia.

Throughout the 90's, apocalyptic millennialism has become increasingly pervasive – and not just in fundamentalist circles. If you look across the spectrum of today's millennialist prophecies – from the rising Y2K paranoia to the Heaven's Gate UFO cult – there seem to be two poles of apocalypticism. At one extreme is what I would call "New Age" millennialism, offering the individual a radical overcoming of the human condition – an apocalypse of the self. The other extreme is best represented by fundamentalist Christian millennialism, which preaches a fiery apocalypse of history. Both mark a decisive break from the more balanced visions of the future, such as that found in *The Urantia Book* – those forecasting a gradual lessening of evil (personal or historic) through evo-

lutionary change that is grounded in cosmic law.

The sane approach to the coming millennial changes should exclude the shortcut fantasies of transformation dreamed up by the apocalyptic imagination of Christians, New Agers, or anyone else. Instead, we need to remain mindful of all forms of fluctuation in the tempo of change, while resting in the stillness of the eternal spirit within us. This means reckoning ourselves with the entire sweep of evolutionary change, including naturally-occurring periods of epochal transformation that might result from a global financial breakdown, or the consequences of the Y2K crisis. Squaring ourselves with genuine change does not mean embracing some magical apocalypse of time that removes the need for arduous inner spiritual work or involvement in the democratic political process.

COMMON THREAD IN MILLENIALISM

How best to recognize a toxic version of apocalyptic millennialism? Despite all their diversity, the end-time prophecies of the late 1990's do seem to share certain key qualities. First of all, most of them are sourced – often unwittingly – from the Bible itself, the common cultural template for apocalyptic fantasies in the West. Second and most important, they all manifest an all-too-human desire to put a sudden end to the misery of history, to make way for the new Utopia of the “beyond-times.”

Well, then, what exactly is time? The cosmologist Stephen Hawking published an almost unreadable book on the nature of time that became an international bestseller. Feels good to know that there's a tidy “brief history of time” out there that someone, somewhere, has a handle on – right? But the truth is that we each have to consciously confront the problem of time: in fact, as *The Urantia Book* makes clear, we can't even think logically without referring to some framework that describes the origin, history, and destiny of all things. Scholars like Mircea Eliade point out that every culture generates its governing myths within a framework that logically explains beginnings and endings. The archetypal pattern of mythic consciousness, he shows, always includes at least three elements: a creation myth (origin); a fall from grace into the suffering of time (history); and a vision of the last things, or end-times (destiny).

Christianity is certainly no exception here. Genesis provides a distinctive creation myth. This is followed by a fall from grace by Adam and Eve, and their expulsion from the Garden that marks the beginning of the misery of human history (See Genesis 3:18: “Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life...”) As for the notion of destiny, the prophetic

Despite all their diversity, the end-time prophecies of the late 1990's do seem to share certain key qualities.

passages in Daniel, Ezekiel, the New Testament, and the Book of Revelation have been the scriptural well from which end-timers have drawn their magical visions of the end. In addition, most millennialist scenarios are also sourced from one-sided selections from the many phases of Jesus' own teaching about the coming Kingdom of God. That's perhaps one reason why we find the midwayers taking great pains to present the multifaceted nature of Jesus' gospel in Paper 170.

Though it is more difficult to trace the universal, cross-cultural human urge that underlies apocalyptic millennialism, there are many clues. Again, one of its clearest marks is an immature impatience with time itself – with the inexorable slowness of evolution. End-times prophets simply cannot accept the pacing of the overcoming of evil in history.

PRESUMPTION VERSUS HOPE

So what about the problem of evil? What kind of God is it, after all, who permits such unmitigated evils as war, famine, genocide and oppression? Must we endure such miseries forever? I believe the answer seems to come down to two stark alternatives: the presumptuous fantasies of end-time prophets, versus a balanced hopefulness that grows from some sort of religious faith or spiritual forbearance – true patience.

In Old Testament prophecy (see, for example, the Book of Joel), God is an omnipotent and just God who promises his people a “Day” of the end to evil and suffering. This hoped-for fulfillment of God's promise is the basis of what theologians call hope eschatology. In hope eschatology, we live in the light of trust in the divine promise; in other words, our hope flowers forth in the serenity of a patient belief in an inevitably better future.

But such hopefulness is a narrow path. Hope always depends on a most difficult existential exercise – enduring faith. In his book, *Theology of Hope*, the great theologian Jurgen Moltmann identifies the forms of impairment of hope as despair and presumption:

“Presumption is a premature, self-willed anticipation of the fulfillment of what we hope for from God. Despair is the premature, arbitrary anticipation of the non-fulfillment of what we hope for from God. Both forms of

hopelessness, by anticipating the fulfillment or by giving up hope, cancel the wayfaring character of hope. They rebel against the patience in which hope trusts in the God of the promise.”

Presumption and despair are “sins against hope,” says Moltmann. And presumption is the impairment of hope deployed by apocalypticism. In essence, apocalyptic millennialism imposes a narrow, wishful, circumscribed, human timetable upon God’s cosmic promise of orderly evolutionary change that is based, if you will, on the absolute justice of karmic law. Apocalypticism strikes against our hope in lawful, cosmic evolution – with petty presumptuousness that thinks it knows just what the future holds for you and me.

Psychologically, apocalypticism chafes at the presence of evil, losing all sense of proportion. It is overly intolerant of imperfection. At some point it abandons the way of hopefulness in any divine promise. And in the end will manufacture some end-time scenario that’s customized to the needs of the moment. Currently, we are seeing this malady occur in the case of the Y2K crisis. It is true that Y2K is a national emergency of sorts; but watch the press over the coming months, and I predict that you will increasingly witness that this genuine crisis becomes framed in a presumptuous apocalypticism. Fearful visions will be spouted forth in the websites and broadsides of apocalyptic millennialists of every stripe.

As you do study this phenomenon, bear in mind throughout that apocalyptic millennialism is prideful as well as presumptuous. For example, philosopher Kenneth Burke shows that end-times predictions presume a knowledge of the very essence of human history. To proclaim “a history’s end,” says Kenneth Burke, “is a formal way of

proclaiming its essence or nature...”

But through presuming that it knows the very secret of time, apocalypticism shortcuts the challenges of true faith and of spiritual practice. To restate: Sane spirituality rests on patient hope in the promises of the Father that we will all, in time and through our ascension toward Paradise, consummate our deepest spiritual aspirations. This hope beckons us forward in serenity. It may even allow us to discover God’s own faithfulness to unfathomable cosmic law. And finally, we find that the way of hope is also bathed in mystery – in not knowing how it’s all going to turn out, and when. It celebrates the great mysteries of time, of God, and of love.

Thus we find that faith (spiritual practice) and hope are interdependent; we find that together, they induce soul growth. Character is built through continually facing the challenge of the unknown with a practice that is energized with hope. When hope in the future becomes a presumptuous knowledge of the very secrets of time, our spiritual practice is derailed. This is the danger of apocalyptic thinking to personal growth and to orderly progress of the human community.

Byron Belitsos has been reading *The Urantia Book* for 25 years. He is publisher of the new book, *Just in Case: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Y2K Crisis*, (Origin Press, May 1999), a widely acclaimed anthology of key essays on the Year 2000 computer crisis. He is also publisher and co-editor (with Fred Harris) of *The Center Within: Lessons from the Heart of the Urantia Revelation*, (December 1998). Both are available in bookstores or at his website: www.IntegralSpirit.com.

MAGISTERIAL MISSIONS

Behzad Sarmast, Boulder, CO

Thousands of years before the arrival of Michael on Urantia, Machiventa Melchizedek’s missionaries foretold of the impending arrival of a Paradise Son on Urantia. Likewise did Van and his associates prepare the civilized world for the arrival of Adam and Eve, correctly discerning their imminent arrival. History shows that such divine visitations are always foretold, and that heaven gives enough signs to “prepare the way” for such heavenly gifts – today is no different.

As our planet continues to tread the blind path of service to the self, and carry our race toward yet another

age of secular madness and destruction, a new revelation has come to light the way of those who would abide by the Father’s will. The Fifth Epochal Revelation in the form of the Urantia Papers has no shortage of prophecy regarding the impending events tied to the terminal judgment of our present age, and though the order of celestial visitations remains an unknown, there are enough clues given to facilitate the formulation of several distinct inevitabilities.

Yet again the world cries out for a Messiah who will fit the shape of their particular ideology, and put an end

to their suffering. Again we are confronted by what appears to be the “world crisis” referred to by Michael. The purpose of this paper is not to uphold such theories, nor is it to reject them; rather the objective is to clearly define the “harvest” visitations as revealed through the Urantia Papers, whether it occurs tomorrow or a thousand years from now.

“But not often do these world princes fail in their missions of organizing and administering the inhabited spheres, and their success greatly facilitates the subsequent missions of the Material Sons, who come to engraft the higher forms of creature life on the primitive men of the worlds. Their rule also does much to prepare the planets for the Paradise Sons of God, who subsequently come to judge the worlds and to inaugurate successive dispensations.” (P. 573)

An Avonal Son of Paradise origin, often called a Magisterial Son, is the only order other than Michael himself who is authorized and capable of terminating one age and beginning another. Urantia had the fortune of hosting our Creator Son on a bestowal mission, but all other evolutionary planets of Nebadon must sometime be visited by an Avonal on a bestowal mission, who experiences a natural birth and death, and subsequently pours the Spirit of Truth upon all flesh. In every way are these Avonals the equal of Michael in carrying out these bestowal missions; they are truly divine.

Regarding the “end of the age,” Jesus told us: *“But the times of the reappearing of the Son of Man are known only in the councils of Paradise; not even the angels of heaven know when this will occur. However, you should understand that, when 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.” (P. 1915)*

As only a Magisterial Son is capable of terminating a dispensation, Michael’s statement above states that at the point of harvest we are due a visit by either an Avonal Paradise Son or Michael himself. There is simply no other order capable of performing such a function. But the revelation, however subtle, repeats this same fact several times.

“We most positively believe that Michael will again come in person to Urantia, but we have not the slightest idea as to when or in what manner he may choose to come. Will his second advent on earth be timed to occur in connection with the terminal judgment of this present age, either with or without the associated appearance of a Magisterial Son?” (P. 1919)

So we have repeated reference to the possibility of the arrival of a Magisterial Son, but with the quote above we may further infer that it could be Michael, a Magisterial Son, or both at the same time.

“...when the world has passed through the long winter of material-mindedness and you discern the coming of the spiritual springtime of a new dispensation, should you know that the summertime of a new visitation draws near.”

(P. 1915)

An Avonal Son performs three distinct and separate functions when visiting a planet for a judicial action. *“The arrival of a Paradise Avonal on an evolutionary world for the purpose of terminating a dispensation and of inaugurating a new era of planetary progression is not necessarily either a magisterial mission or a bestowal mission. Magisterial missions sometimes, and bestowal missions always, are incarnations; that is, on such assignments the Avonals serve on a planet in material form – literally. Their other visits are “technical,” and in this capacity an Avonal is not incarnated for planetary service. If a Magisterial Son comes solely as a dispensational adjudicator, he arrives on a planet as a spiritual being, invisible to the material creatures of the realm. Such technical visits occur repeatedly in the long history of an inhabited world.” (P. 226)*

This means that when the previous quotes told us about the possibility of a Magisterial Son visit, it could be any one of the three functions mentioned above. However, since we have already had a bestowal son, Michael, this would only leave the “technical” visit, or a Magisterial mission, since each planet receives only one bestowal Son (born as an infant) during its career. In other words, the prophecy about a magisterial visit can only come in the way of a technical visit or a magisterial mission. The main difference between these two scenarios is all-important to us, because the former case only necessitates an Avonal to visit in an invisible form, while the latter demands an actual, visible incarnation by this Paradise Son – an incarnation like that of Machiventa.

In essence, all three of the Avonal missions are “judicial actions,” since in each case the sleepers are judged, and a new dispensation started. Regarding the “technical” visits, however, we are told: *“This era of light and life, inaugurated by the Teacher Sons at the conclusion of their final planetary mission, continues indefinitely on the inhab-*

ited worlds. Each advancing stage of settled status may be segregated by the judicial actions of the Magisterial Sons into a succession of dispensations; but all such judicial actions are purely technical, in no way modifying the course of planetary events.” (P. 621) (Emphasis mine.)

So it would seem that these technical visits occur on planets that are progressing normally, since the government is in the hands of a loyal Prince and Material Son. These technical visits are invisible to the mortals of the realm, apparently because the smooth operation of world affairs does not necessitate a magisterial mission in visible form. We know this because the next dispensational visit for our planet would, by definition, be the harvest spoken of by Michael. An Avonal, therefore, cannot visit in any form without major consequences for the mortals of the realm, since this visit would certainly “modify” the planetary affairs in every way possible. In other words, this visitation cannot be a “technical” visit because such visits do not “in any way modify” the planet, and we know that the harvest will modify our planet in every way imaginable. Therefore, we are left only with the possibility of a Magisterial visit.

This conclusion is further supported by a direct quote from the revelation itself: “*Urantia may yet be visited by an Avonal commissioned to incarnate on a magisterial mission, but regarding the future appearance of Paradise Sons, not even ‘the angels in heaven know the time or manner of such visitations,’ for a Michael-bestowal world becomes the individual and personal ward of a Master Son and, as such, is wholly subject to his own plans and rulings.*” (P. 227)

Notice that in the quote above we are told, directly, that we are due a “magisterial mission,” not a technical visit. So it would appear that the end of this dispensation, whenever it should occur, would necessitate either the personal presence of Michael, or an Avonal Paradise Son on a Magisterial mission, or both. These facts are confirmed directly by the revelation itself, with no other options given.

The reason for this careful dissection of the revelation regarding this topic is to be found here: “*A planet may experience many magisterial visitations both before and after the appearance of a bestowal Son. It may be visited many times by the same or other Avonals, acting as dispensational adjudicators, but such technical missions of judgment are nei-*

ther bestowal nor magisterial, and the Avonals are never incarnated at such times. Even when a planet is blessed with repeated magisterial missions, the Avonals do not always submit to mortal incarnation; and when they do serve in the likeness of mortal flesh, they always appear as adult beings of the realm; they are not born of woman.” (P. 226) (Emphasis mine).

The quote above says that a planet may be visited by an Avonal Son on a Magisterial mission many times, but they do not always “submit to mortal incarnation.” However, the “initial” visit has a different status: “*When the Paradise Avonals come to the mortal spheres on judicial actions, solely as dispensation adjudicators, they are never incarnated. But when they come on magisterial missions, at least the initial one, they are always incarnated, though they do not experience birth, neither do they die the death of the realm.*” (P. 594) (Emphasis mine.)

And, of course “... *Urantia has never been host to an Avonal Son on a magisterial mission.*” (P. 227)

We are told here that should our world be visited by an Avonal Son prior to the arrival of Michael himself, he would be incarnated as a grown man and visible to all mortals of the realm. With great precision, however subtle, the clues manage to one by one spell out a very clear scenario, or at least narrow down the field to a few solid inevitabilities. These clues are found in different parts of the Urantia Papers, and they required careful analysis and meticulous magnification before the facts revealed themselves. We are never told of this possibility directly, and yet, there it is.

“*When a Creator Son enters upon the bestowal career on an evolutionary world, he goes alone; but when one of his Paradise brothers, an Avonal Son, enters upon a bestowal, he is accompanied by the Melchizedek supporters, twelve in number, who so efficiently contribute to the success of the bestowal mission. They also support the Paradise Avonals on magisterial missions to the inhabited worlds, and in these assignments the Melchizedeks are visible to mortal eyes if the Avonal Son is also thus manifest.*” (P. 386) (Emphasis mine.)

If we are to believe our eyes, what we are being told here is, that whenever the “terminal judgment” of this dispensation should occur, we are due a visit by either Michael himself or a “touchable” Avonal Paradise Son visibly on the planet, accompanied by twelve Melchizedek emergency Sons also visible to human eyes.

These twelve Melchizedeks are often referred to as the “Melchizedek receivers” in the Urantia Papers. They replaced another twelve of their kind at the time of the planetary rebellion, and have been intimately connected with Urantia’s affairs ever since. After the rebellion “... *The affairs of Urantia were for a long time administered by a council of planetary receivers, twelve Melchizedeks, confirmed by*

“...Urantia has never been host to an Avonal Son on a magisterial mission.” (P. 227)

the mandate of the senior constellation ruler, the Most High Father of Norlatiadek.” (P. 759) “The twelve Melchizedek receivers of Urantia did heroic work. They preserved the remnants of civilization, and their planetary policies were faithfully executed by Van.” (P. 760)

These twelve effectively handed over the planetary government to Adam and Eve shortly after their arrival, and left Urantia for Jerusem. After the default of our racial uplifters, these same twelve returned once more to Urantia and resumed their authority and jurisdiction.

“Time passed, but Adam was not certain of the nature of their offense until seventy days after the default of Eve, when the Melchizedek receivers returned to Urantia and assumed jurisdiction over world affairs.” (P. 844) Roughly four thousand years ago, these twelve became once again instrumental in the direction of our planet, and proved their loyalty to both God and man.

“The twelve Melchizedek receivers knew of Michael’s impending bestowal on their planet, but they did not know how soon it would occur; therefore they convened in solemn council and petitioned the Most Highs of Edentia that some provision be made for maintaining the light of truth on Urantia. . . . And it was in consequence of having been thrown so completely on their own resources that Machiventa Melchizedek, one of the twelve planetary receivers, volunteered to do that which had been done only six times in all the history of Nebadon: to personalize on earth as a temporary man of the realm, to bestow himself as an emergency Son of world ministry.” (P. 1014)

“During the years of Machiventa’s incarnation the Urantia Melchizedek receivers functioned as eleven.” (P. 1024)

If the dispensational visit does include an Avonal Paradise Son on a magisterial mission, then the twelve Melchizedeks who we are told will accompany this Magisterial Son can be no other than our own Melchizedek receivers. And if these twelve who are so versed in our planet’s history and affairs do accompany an Avonal Son, then Machiventa must also come visibly, since he is an integral part of the twelve.

This possibility is an amazing opportunity for the celestials, as well as for us. In one strategic move the human race on Urantia could be visited by a Paradise Son on a magisterial mission, fully visible and in the flesh, accompanied by twelve visible Melchizedeks, one of them being our vicegerent Planetary Prince, Machiventa Melchizedek, and of course, possibly even Michael himself.

The harvest is not likely to be a calm period on Earth. No mortal or groups of mortals can be expected to do much in the face of a belligerent planet plagued by total chaos – we will need much help and guidance. 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.”
(P. 1915)**

now we have the assurance that even if Michael does not come until after the beginning of the next dispensational era, there are other celestials, even divine beings, who will be here personally to help humanity cross that perilous bridge.

Go about your life, continue the labor Michael entrusted us with, but do not neglect to be wise and “discern the signs of the times.” And if you believe that our global problems spell nothing less than the harvest spoken of by the Father incarnate, then know that aside from the “rapture” theory or a military recourse by Michael’s forces, this newest revelation is also foretelling a new possibility: a visible Paradise Son with twelve visible Melchizedeks, likely to contact the more progressive individuals of the realm prior to the judgment.

Behzad Sarmast was born in Iran, but he has lived in the United States for the last 22 years. His deep thirst for the truth made him travel extensively around the world and study all religions, but the revelation finally brought him home. He recently moved from New York City to Boulder, CO.

*“We most positively believe that Michael will again come in person to Urantia, but we have not the slightest idea as to when or in what manner he may choose to come. Will his second advent on earth be timed to occur in connection with the terminal judgment of this present age, either with or without the associated appearance of a Magisterial Son?”
(P. 1919)*

SPRINGTIME: A STUDY OF THE FUTURE

Henry Begemann, Wassenaar, Netherlands

(From *The URANTIAN*, Journal of the URANTIA Brotherhood (now known as the Fellowship), Summer 1988)

Since readers of *The Urantia Book* are surely interested in the subject of prophesy, it may be opportune and helpful to study more deeply what our book says about the relatively near future.

The most significant things Jesus said about it are to be found in section 2 of Paper 176, wherein he said: *"The things which you now look down upon are coming to an end, but this will be a new beginning out of which the gospel of the kingdom will go to all the world and this salvation will spread to all peoples. And when the kingdom shall have come to its full fruition, be assured that the Father in heaven will not fail to visit you with an enlarged revelation of truth..."* (P. 1914)

This "enlarged revelation of truth" has already appeared: *The Urantia Book*. The Master makes it clear that he indeed means our book, because he continues: *"...even as he has already bestowed upon this world him who became the prince of darkness [Caligastia, first epochal revelation], and then Adam [second epochal revelation], who was followed by Melchizedek [third revelation of epochal significance], and in these days, the Son of Man." [fourth epochal revelation].* (P. 1914)

On page 1007:4 it is stated: *"There have been many events of religious revelation but only five of epochal significance."* The first four are the same as mentioned above by Jesus. The fifth is mentioned as the Urantia Papers, the Melchizedek author's name for our book. It is evident that Jesus already 2000 years ago foretold the coming of our book, a book of epochal significance and even more, because it heralds a new dispensation.

From this fulfillment of his promise we could deduce also that the kingdom indeed has "...come to its full fruition..." (P. 1914), as Jesus declared this to be a condition for the appearing of the enlarged revelation of truth. Now since this revelation did appear, this proves that the

kingdom indeed has come to its full fruition. But what did Jesus mean by these words? Has all the world become Jesusonian or even Christian? Surely not; the meaning must be different.

Jesus could, for evolutionary reasons, not reveal as much truth as the fifth epochal revelation contains. Revelation is progressive. Therefore, to me the meaning of "coming to its full fruition" is that about all that reasonably could be expected to be attained by the fourth epochal revelation, given time and circumstances, has been attained.

Jesus taught the Fatherhood of God, the relationship between the individual and his personal Father. Our book expands this revelation to the revelation of the Universal Father, the Father of the whole planet and all planets. Jesus purposely limited his revelation to the spiritual domain, mainly the personal, spiritual domain. Our book includes also the material and physical domains, which are not merely personal. The universe, the planet, the population, the group, and the community are extensively dealt with also. But fully in accordance with the thoroughness of the universe, the book rehearses at length the earlier revelations, particularly in Part IV. Returning to page 1914, we find that immediately after the words *"an enlarged revelation of truth,"* Jesus also promised, in the same sentence, *"...an enhanced demonstration of righteousness..."* (P. 1914)

During several years I have overlooked these words, or at least they did not catch my attention. Subconsciously I considered them as a kind of embellishment of "the enlarged revelation of truth" part. But the authors, and certainly Jesus, are not given to embellishment and superfluous terminology.

So let us try to find the meaning of these words. Their meaning must be closely connected with "the enlarged revelation;" since they immediately follow in the same sentence. In our discussion of the fifth epochal revelation so far, we find that, besides the domain of personal religious experience, on which the fourth revelation was focused, it also includes the community aspects. And in the social community, righteousness is a fundamental value. True, it is also basic in the individual experience, but personally we can, and should, discover righteousness, the will of God, through communion with the indwelling great teacher, the Adjuster. The community, however, has in general not attained to that indispensable level. So the Father and his Son, our

"Father in heaven will not fail to visit you with an enlarged revelation of truth..." (P. 1914)

Planetary Prince, will send us, compelled by love, a demonstration of righteousness. On the following page, Jesus explains that this demonstration implies a demonstrator. (P. 1915:2)

This apparently does not refer to his personal return to earth.

I WILL SOMETIME RETURN

After having repeated his promise that “I will sometime return” he explains that this return “will be with power and in the spirit” only visible to “the eye of the spirit;” not to “the eye of the flesh.” Therefore, this return can hardly be identical with “another dispensational bestowal,” mentioned in this same paragraph (P. 1915). Moreover, Jesus adds that “...*the times of the reappearing of the Son of Man are known only in the councils of Paradise; not even the angels of heaven know when this will occur.*” (P. 1915) And the midwayers surmise: “*But if every eye is to behold him, and if only spiritual eyes are to discern his presence, then must his advent be long deferred.*” (P. 1919)

Inasmuch as there is no official Urantia Brotherhood or Foundation interpretation of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, the views expressed herein are based wholly upon each author’s understanding and personal religious experience.

Continuing our study and meditation of Jesus’ words, we read: “*However, you should understand that, when this gospel of the kingdom shall have been proclaimed to all the world for the salvation of all peoples...*” (P. 1915) This is a repetition of the conditions for the appearance of “the enlarged revelation of truth” on page 1914. And we have already seen that because of the actual appearance of the enlarged revelation of truth, this condition must have been fulfilled. And because in this paragraph Jesus deals with “another dispensational bestowal,” this condition has been fulfilled, too, with regard to this bestowal.

But Jesus adds another condition: “... *and when the fullness of the age has come to pass...*” (P. 1915). It has been written more than once that the book has been given long before its time or a hundred years before its time. Its time is the new epoch, or dispensation. The new dispensation can only come “when the fullness of the age [the present dispensation] has come to pass,” This has not yet occurred, and so we live in an interim period between the appearance of the book and the dispensation that begins with a dispensational bestowal. It is this interim Jesus refers to when he adds this new condition. How carefully Jesus chose his words on this memorable Tuesday evening! And of course it is another proof of Jesus’ statement, “the Father and the Son know all things.”

What could be the purpose of such an interim period? A bestowal is far from being just an accident in the

evolution of a planet; it is most carefully planned in the universe. And this planning includes a certain activity from the side of the receivers of such a bestowal. This is illustrated in the cases of Adam and Jesus. In the latter case there had been prophetic predictions to the extent that all Jewry was expecting a new Messiah. And John the Baptist had been destined to become the forerunner of the new kingdom. The world must be prepared for the new dispensational bestowal. Therefore our book, as a phase of the new dispensation, has been given before its time to be followed later by the complemental phase of the “demonstrator of righteousness.” And we, as the receivers of the prebestowal book, have been given the mandate “to form thousands of study groups” to the end there may be teachers and leaders for the time “when the fullness of the age has come to pass.”

The Urantia Papers, though of epochal significance, and belonging to the new epoch, do not constitute in themselves the beginning of a new dispensation. But the dispensational bestowal, the demonstrator of righteousness, does constitute the new dispensation. Apparently *The Urantia Book* has been given in advance, and this gives a new meaning and dimension to the book for us who live in this interim time. We should not study it for personal salvation only, however indispensable this may be. After having secured personal salvation, the alert and understanding reader gives attention to the responsibility and task this enlarged revelation of truth assigns to him in connection with the coming bestowal.

And then Jesus adds something that many times has caused me much trouble. “... *the Father will send you another dispensational bestowal, or else the Son of Man will return to adjudge the age.*” (P. 1915) In itself it is not remarkable that the Son of Man should return for a judicial action. We know that: “*When a Paradise Son visits an evolutionary world and becomes like one of its people, his presence terminates a dispensation and constitutes a judgment of the realm.*” (P. 226) Jesus has terminated the Adamic dispensation and opened a new one, the dispensation of the Spirit of Truth. We have not had a Magisterial Son to do this, and therefore, it seems logical that our Paradise Son should return to adjudge the age. Such a judicial mission is not a bestowal and the Son will not be visible on such a mission.

But my real trouble lies in the little word “else.” Taken literally, and in itself, this could mean there even will not be another bestowal! Though I am inclined to reason that, because of the fulfillment of the condition of “the full fruition;” and the actual appearance of “the enlarged revelation of truth;” the second part of Jesus’ promise will be fulfilled also; nevertheless, this last part of the sentence could contain a certain warning to us. Could it

be that we, who have been privileged and blessed with the knowledge of these promises of the Master, and having a special responsibility in the preparation for this dispensational bestowal, may fail in our tasks? Does it matter if we should or should not do our duty in the execution of Michael's plans? We also belong to the group that is designated as "stewards of truth," and we also might be qualified as "barren stewards." Why is there no increase, no growing increase in the number of study groups? *"In accordance with the truth committed to your hands, [the URANTIA Papers], will the Master of truth require a reckoning."* (P. 1918)

After having dealt with *"...the travail of Jerusalem..."* (P. 1915) and the return of the Son of Man of which *"no one in heaven or on earth may presume to speak,"* he continues with the subject in which we actually are interested now, in our time. *"But you should be wise regarding the ripening of an age; you should be alert to discern the signs of the times. You know when the fig tree shows its tender branches and puts forth its leaves that summer is near. Likewise, when the world has passed through the long winter of material-mindedness and you discern the coming of the spiritual springtime of a new dispensation, should you know that the summertime of a new visitation draws near."* (P. 1915)

We do discern the signs of the times: the "gospel of the kingdom" has gone to all the world and all peoples, the "full fruition" has been achieved, and last but not least "the enlarged revelation of truth" has appeared. The midwayers state: *"At the time of this writing [the year 1935] the worst of the materialistic age is over..."* (P. 2076) Therefore, the spiritual springtime is now.

GIVEN BEFORE ITS TIME

If we return for a moment to the statement that the book has been given a hundred years before its time, it is remarkable to find this period also mentioned in our book: *"Here, Master, is the truth you committed to us a hundred or a thousand years ago."* (P. 1918) (The number "thousand" also is not accidental, as may be explained later.) It is not uncommon for our book to reveal something in such an inconspicuous way. The book has been given to be stud-

ied, not for superficial reading. A superficial reader does not notice such things, but an alert student will try to connect them with other items and so gain new, often surprising, insights or indications that his own line of thinking is correct.

Another corroborative fact is, as speculated by many among us, that the book for the first one hundred years has been given in the custody of "the angels of the churches," while after that period the progress angels take over. The angels of the churches *"...endeavor to maintain the ideals of that which has survived for the sake of the safe transit of moral values from one epoch to another,"* while the progress angels *"...are entrusted with the task of initiating the evolutionary progress of the successive social ages."* (P. 1255)

A NEW BESTOWAL

There are more places in the book that point to a new bestowal. It is said of the Trinity Teacher Sons that they *"... even now visit your world for the purpose of formulating plans concerning their projected sojourn on your sphere. They will be due to appear on Urantia after its inhabitants have gained comparative deliverance from the shackles of animalism and from the fetters of materialism."* (P. 231) Remember the statement of the midwayers: *"the worst of the materialistic age is over."* (P. 2076)

The Teacher Sons come to initiate a spiritual age, "a millennium of cosmic enlightenment." Future dispensations are not going to last tens of thousands of years; they become much shorter as evolution advances. In this light should be seen the "thousand years" mentioned above.

Teacher Sons are normally accompanied by a Magisterial Son for the necessary judicial action. Because we have not had a Magisterial Son, the Son of Man could (invisibly to the living mortals on earth) reappear to judge the stewards of truth.

It is worthwhile to study sections 7-9 of paper 20 (PP. 230-232) for a better understanding of the purposes of the Trinity Teacher Sons. *"They make real the spiritual counterparts of material knowledge and temporal wisdom."* (P. 232) We now have *"...a society which staggers under the guilt of tolerating science without idealism, politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without restraint, knowledge without character, power without conscience, and industry without morality."* (P. 2086) The Teacher Sons will make real the spiritual counterparts of these otherwise empty and senseless attainments. Is not this wholly in agreement with a bestowal demonstration of righteousness?

Trinity Teacher Sons remain invisible, but are accompanied by the Brilliant Evening Stars, who serve ". .

**The Urantia Papers...
do not constitute in
themselves the beginning
of a new dispensation.**

as liaisons between the mortals of the realm and the invisible corps of Teacher Sons.” (P. 408) The Brilliant Evening Stars are also invisible to mortals, but they “...possess a spirit force which can be manifested independently of their personal presence.” (P. 407) “The entire world [of Jerusem] has been rendered spiritually fragrant [by the Brilliant Evening Stars] since so many of their activities were transferred here from Salvington.” (P. 526)

Such an unusual transference to the capital of our system is also meaningful. Teacher Sons together with Brilliant Evening Stars can have a very powerful influence on a planet, even when invisible. When this is complemented with a visible demonstrator and his liaisons, tremendous changes in the spiritual atmosphere of the planet may be expected.

In the section concerning the archangels is the well known paragraph about their divisional headquarters on Urantia: “Do you grasp the significance of the fact that your lowly and confused planet has become a divisional headquarters for the universe [not planetary, neither system nor constellation, but 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.’ ” (P. 409) Another example of universe speculation!

In Michael’s planning, Urantia evidently is to become an important center. This “lowly and confused planet” has rejected its rightful Sovereign. And this is the divine retribution: Urantia will become a jewel in the crown of Michael, our Master, through a concentrated effort of his and the Father’s ministers. Is this of concern to us now? No, indeed, if we are interested merely in personal salvation and organization, or if we do not become universe-minded. His plans are partially revealed already now. This means a challenge to our study and understanding and a call for cooperation.

We belong to Urantia, now and even after death. But let us not repeat the foolishness of mere human activity without spiritual enlightenment, and let us not be proud, we are only servants! Let us be sure to really cooperate with the powers that be. And the first step in this is the growing communion with the Father within. This is the first “phase of the kingdom.” (P. 1862) And then we should enliven phase 2, “the enlarging brotherhood of gospel believers...” (P. 1863), through this realization of phase 1 (plenty of work here!), and that is what phase 3, “the supermortal brotherhood of invisible spiritual beings” (P. 1863) is waiting for.

Michael is already engaged in carrying out his plans, as we have seen. Clear evidence is also the fact of the

assignment of Machiventa Melchizedek as Vicegerent Planetary Prince of Urantia. For an unnamed reason he has not yet assumed his office. But because we are free to speculate, I think this is because Urantia is not yet fully ready for it. Caligastia is hardly recognized in his sinister and nefarious actions, often not even among Urantians. But at least we could begin to try to realize what the acceptance of Melchizedek would imply, in this way preparing ourselves. Always the relatively few are the decisive factor, the vanguard.

Our fallen Lanonandek Son will be replaced by a Melchizedek, one of the order of the “eldest Sons of the local universe;” even more than a Constellation Father. “They are the teachers who so often win whole worlds of advanced life to the final and full recognition of the Creator Son and his Paradise Father.” (P. 386) They are “understanding friends, sympathetic teachers, and wise counselors” (P. 385) and they are powerful!

And then in Paper 170, The Kingdom of Heaven, it is predicted: “Sooner or later another and greater John the Baptist [not plural] is due to arise proclaiming ‘the kingdom of God is at hand’ - meaning a return to the high spiritual concept of Jesus...” (P. 1866) John the Baptist was the forerunner and herald of Jesus’ bestowal. So this new and greater John the Baptist probably will be the forerunner of a new bestowal, as has seemingly been confirmed by the revelators. Such a great preacher may, through the present worldwide communication media, bring about a considerable change in the religious thinking of this world: “... such a restatement as will undo the work of Jesus’ early followers who went about to create a socio-philosophical system of belief regarding the fact of Michael’s sojourn on earth.” (P. 1866)

This is a mighty prediction! To undo the work of Jesus’ early followers! Don’t read it superficially, just realize what this may mean in particular for the orthodox churches. And what does this mean for us, now? If such a spiritual revolution does take place, are we ready to assist in giving positive guidance to the confused? This event is not ages away!

STUDY WITHOUT PREJUDICE

We have discussed so far some of the references our book makes to the coming events; understanding students may find more. Let us study without prejudice. We are all somewhat prejudiced because we are not used to and prepared for sudden events. “When physical conditions are ripe, sudden mental evolutions may take place; when mind status is propitious, sudden spiritual transformations may occur...” (P. 740) For us, personally, the greatest transformation remains the growing and enlightening communion with the Father within, and also when we direct our thinking

“...when mind status is propitious, sudden spiritual transformations may occur...” (P. 740)

to these subjects. This will prevent inopportune human action. Remember, our greatest action is seeking, discovering, the Father’s will, through value-realization.

“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.” (P. 2082)

We have already referred to the five phases of the kingdom, mentioned on PP. 1862-3. Phase 4 is *“The prospect of the more perfect fulfillment of the will of God, the advance toward the dawn of a new social order in connection with improved spiritual living—the next age of man.”* (P. 1863) It should be noted that this phase follows Phase 3: *“The supermortal brotherhood of invisible spiritual beings which prevails on earth and in heaven, the superhuman kingdom of God.”* (P. 1863) The five phases show causal order. And the midways continue: *“Although Jesus referred one phase of the kingdom to the future [Phase 5], and did, on numerous occasions, intimate that such an event might appear as a part of a world crisis...”* (P. 1863) I think we should give some attention to our attitude in such a crisis.

Jesus’ attitude towards temporal upheavals or terrestrial cataclysms is depicted in this statement: *“What does it matter to you who believe this gospel of the kingdom if nations overturn, the age ends, or all things visible crash, since you know that your life is the gift of the Son, and that it is eternally secure in the Father?”* (P. 1916)

Jesus was very consistent. Eternal things are more real than temporal things. There is no real need to fear, though he understands our human reactions. His statement is psychologically and spiritually practical. It reminds me of wartime, when the bomber fleets from England used to roar above us on their way to Germany. It proved practical then to reckon with the worst that could happen, and then say: So what! It gave calm. Jesus also brings up the worst that could happen: *“... all things visible crash...”*

I believe no crisis will reach to that extent, because there are so many passages in our book that make such an event highly improbable. What could a “demonstrator of righteousness” do when there are no more mortals to teach? But psychologically and spiritually it is a sound thing to ponder. It is a challenge to our faith. Let us trust in our all-wise and merciful Father and his ministers. Remember what has been said about providence. Providence works for the whole, for the group. If we individually are

important for the spiritual welfare of other people, providence works. The best protection we can have is in being spiritually active and alert. And let it always be in our hearts: *“Kingdom builders ... are not to be disturbed by temporal upheavals or ... terrestrial cataclysms.”* (P. 1916)

There is so much we can do now for the fourth phase of the kingdom. Our invisible brothers of the kingdom are waiting for us. Let us put our spiritual imagination into action, in sonship with God. Peace-movements on the whole are active in the negative: anti-nuclear warfare, and so on. Our book shows us, in the Urmia lectures, for instance, how we could be positively active in promoting world government. Such a thing must always first become real in the minds of the few, and the more real it becomes for them, the more it will contaminate other people, because it is sound and positive.

In this way and in many others we could prepare ourselves for “the next age.” And thus we co-operate with our superiors. If we sincerely try to realize what changes will occur, this will bring ample opportunity for constructive thinking. What is needed is spiritual insight and universe-consciousness, (which only comes after God-consciousness). But we could begin with universe-mindedness, willingness to overcome prejudice from inertia and lack of imagination. And lack of belief in what has already been revealed of the plans of our Master. God and men need each other. Be of good cheer, it is spring-time already!

Searching among alternative religions in Holland, Henry Begemann found The Urantia Book as he was retiring from an insurance sales career. Recognizing its importance, he immediately began translating the book into the Dutch language. His dedication inspired him to organize and facilitate study groups as European Field Representative. He served on the General Council of the Brotherhood before his death in 1990.

“For us, personally, the greatest transformation remains the growing and enlightening communion with the Father within...”

WHITHER GOEST THOU, WOMAN?

EXPLORING GENDER BIAS IN *THE URANTIA BOOK*

Jeanne Melchior, Dubois, IN

In addition to being a longtime reader of *The Urantia Book*, I have been teaching English, reading, and communication skills for over twenty years. In that time, some of the most profound changes I've seen come about have been those involving gender. Among speakers of the English language, there is an increased awareness of the need for non-biased usage; and words like "man" and "mankind" are now commonly changed to "humankind" in order to reflect the presence of over fifty percent of the population, while the generic masculine pronoun is fast becoming extinct.

We sometimes think that this focus on gender and language, on gender and religion, has been a recent thing. However, as far back as the days of early Christianity, the male-female aspects of God, as well as the role of women in the church, were debated; and that debate has continued, often heatedly, into the present.

We know that the Christian Bible was transmitted to a male dominated culture, and that many of its themes and nearly all of its language reflect this, as do most modern translations. We also know historically, that the Bible was cited often as the reason for keeping "woman in her place". Why then did the revelators of *The Urantia Book* use the gender-biased English language to bring what is purported to be the fifth epochal revelation into being?

Clearly, the gender bias in *The Urantia Book* is as much of a problem as the biased language of the Bible. Since *The Urantia Book* doesn't claim to be infallible, we can at least entertain the idea that not everything in it is meant to be true. As Jesus said to Nathaniel, "...nothing which human nature has touched can be regarded as infallible." (P. 1768)

Even with this disclaimer, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a language sensitive person to read much of *The Urantia Book*, and even more difficult to see it as epochal revelation. I explore this, not to challenge those who find this book a compendium of wisdom, but to let those who are disquieted know they are not alone. The male focus of *The Urantia Book* is pervasive, and for many people, this interferes greatly with the apprehension of truth.

At the heart of this "bias of focus" is the premise that God is Father. The revelators assure us that calling God "Father" is only accidental, but so much of the book is based on this premise, that it begins to strain credulity. The revelators say: "The word GOD is used in these papers

with the following meanings: 1. God the Father – Creator, Controller and Upholder. The Universal Father, the First Person of Deity." (P. 4)

In another passage we are told: "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. If we believe that we are the children of this Creator, it is only natural that we should eventually call him Father." (P. 22)

However, it is NOT natural that as children we should choose to call God "Father." Indeed, the first names humans gave to God were mother names, and the first concepts of God experienced by early humans were as a mother.

The Urantia Book does explore the concept of God as mother. There are references to God the Son as mother (P. 79), and to God the Supreme as mother (P. 4 and P. 1288), but these references are vague and conflicting. When we study the local universe personalities, we read of the Creator Son and the Divine Minister who "enacts the role of a mother, always assisting the Son" (P. 368). No gender equality there, and it gets worse, for we are told that only after the Divine Minister pledged "subordination, fidelity, and obedience" did a "Proclamation of Equality" ensue which: "becomes the transcendent pattern for the family organization and government of even the lowly creatures of the worlds of space. This is, in deed and in truth, the high ideal of the family and the human institution of voluntary marriage." (P. 369) This is so far from any high ideal of family or any imaginable pattern of equality between men and women, that I simply cannot accept it as truth, but only as intrusion of a patriarchal viewpoint.

In another part of *The Urantia Book*, in the Jesus papers, the "Lesson on the Family" continues this biased representation of what a family is. In this paper, Jesus is quoted as saying: "The people of another age will better understand the gospel of the kingdom when it is presented in terms expressive of the family relationship – when man understands religion as the teaching of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, sonship with God." Then Jesus discoursed at great length on the earthly family as an illustration of the heavenly family, restating what he called the "...two fundamental laws of living: the first commandment of love for the father, the head of the family, and the second commandment of mutual love among the children, namely to love your

brother as yourself.” (P. 1603) In the entire “Lesson on the Family” the word mother is never mentioned once! Literally, or as a metaphor, this just doesn’t work. The two great commandments of Jesus, namely to love God and love your fellow humans, are here distorted beyond believability.

In addition to biased language in general, as biased concepts that describe God, both the Jesus of the Bible and the Jesus of *The Urantia Book* go on record as saying that women are equal to men, the stories in both are clearly told from a male perspective. For example, in *The Urantia Book*, much of the Jesus papers recounts the activities of the disciples, but there is only a short section about the women’s corps, with scant details of persons or deeds. The vast majority of the universe hierarchy are described in male terms, and the twenty four Jerusalem Counselors, who represent exemplary mortals throughout the ages, are all male except for Eve. Are we to believe that only males are worthy of such positions?

Where to go from here is far from simple. Translating *The Urantia Book* into a modern version which uses inclusive language is a possibility; however, such a translation would need to change literal meaning in order to be effective. Since biased language is part of a larger problem, that is, an androcentric world view which goes beyond gender, solutions like this won’t work. The authors tell us that: “*The modern age will refuse to accept a religion which is inconsistent with facts and out of harmony with its highest conceptions of truth, beauty, and goodness.*” (P. 2083) In a time when that old androcentric world view is crumbling, *The Urantia Book*, loaded as it is with biased language and concepts, is certainly inconsistent with facts, and is, in many ways, out of harmony with the highest conceptions of truth and goodness.

So where do readers who have long studied *The Urantia Book* have to go? I recently read something that sparked my interest. I don’t recall the source, but it suggested that there are two ways to read scriptures – exoterically and esoterically. The exoteric reading is literal, and looks at historical meanings. Unfortunately, such a reading alone tends to idolize the words rather than the truth; and fundamentalists of all persuasions read scripture in this way, solidifying truth into dogma. On the other hand, the esoteric meaning looks for hidden meanings, or information coded there. I assume this would be similar to the recent Bible code that found predictions encoded within the text. I suppose such a possibility exists, and *The Urantia Book* is simply an undiscovered code, but I find that too speculative.

I can, however, think of a third way of reading, which is reading with the heart. It is possible, I think, to read and look for only those passages that truly speak to the

spirit, and let the rest go. Undoubtedly many of us read that way, and this is likely at least part of what the revelators had in mind when they said:

“*I have called you again to be born of the spirit. . . . And so may you pass from . . . the authority of tradition to the experience of knowing God. . . . The religion of the spirit leaves you forever free to follow the truth wherever the leadings of the spirit may take you. And who can judge – perhaps this spirit may have something to impart to this generation which other generations have refused to hear?*” (P. 1731) “*You must cease to seek for the word of God only on the pages of the olden records of theologic authority. Those who are born of the spirit of God shall henceforth discern the word of God regardless of whence it appears to take origin. Divine truth must not be discounted because the channel of its bestowal is apparently human. . . .*” (P. 1732-33)

Clearly, *The Urantia Book* was written in the language of another generation, while clearly, despite its imperfections, it contains much that is uplifting, much that is true and good and beautiful. Whether it is enough to read with the heart, is a question which will have to be decided by each person.

Fortunately, God sends messages to all of us every day if we just open our hearts to listen. “*The true child of universe insight looks for the Spirit of Truth in every wise saying. . . .*” (P. 1949) In keeping with this thought, and because of the many problems I find in *The Urantia Book*, my choice has been to put it aside for now, and to direct my focus to other repositories of truth, to writers who make no bones about their human origins. For I fear that I am in agreement with historian Gerda Lerner who says in her book *The Creation of Patriarchy*:

“*The androcentric fallacy, which is built into all the mental constructs of Western civilization, cannot be rectified by ‘adding women.’ What it demands for rectification is a radical restructuring of thought and analysis which once and for all accepts the fact that humanity consists in equal parts of men and women and that the experiences, thoughts, and insights of both sexes must be represented in every generalization that is made about human beings.*” (P. 220)

I’m awaiting the day when clearly and unequivocally, God begins speaking to women as well as men in language which in no way disguises or distorts the truth, and which makes no subtle claim that one gender is subordinate to the other. Then, perhaps, the fifth epochal revelation will become a reality.

Jeanne teaches unbiased language usage, critical thinking skills, and discernment to students at Vincennes University, Jasper Campus, in rural southern Indiana. She lives surrounded by trees and writes about environmental issues.

THE SEVEN PSYCHIC CIRCLES

Linda Buselli, Dallas, TX

Of all the enigmas presented to us by *The Urantia Book*, one of the most puzzling to me has always been the seven psychic circles. Only three of them are given any definition at all, and yet we must attain these stages of spiritual achievement in preparation for Adjuster fusion. I accepted this lack of differentiation between these circles because the book clearly states that they are different for each individual. However, I have found a possible way of giving them shape and form in the work of best-selling author, Caroline Myss, Ph.D.

In her book, *Anatomy of the Spirit* Dr. Myss writes of her experience as a medical intuitive. In pursuing this ability, she became aware of the importance of the seven chakras of Hindu tradition, not only from a physical energy point of view, but as centers of spiritual energies that are as intricate as our physical makeup. As she became more and more certain of these spiritual truths, she realized that the truth of these seven levels of spiritual growth must be true in other religions as well – and she found their relationship to the seven sacraments of Christianity and the seven levels of the Hebrew Kabbalah, the Tree of Life, or Sefirot. Each chakra has a corresponding meaning in a sacrament and a level of the Tree of Life, and now, I believe, in the seven psychic circles of *The Urantia Book*.

In an attempt to apply these to a human life, I began to investigate the growth of Jesus in the seven levels as described by Dr. Myss, and this has resulted in some, to me, startling conclusions. Note that in the following graphic, the psychic circles are numbered in reverse order to the chakras. Let's begin with the first chakra, corresponding to the seventh psychic circle. This chakra represents the "tribal" level to Dr. Myss, and corresponds to the sacrament

of baptism and the first level of the Sefirot, Shekhinah, meaning "divine presence". "One who enters must enter through this gate" (Zohar 1:7b) Of course, we enter the seventh circle when we make our first moral decision and receive our Thought Adjuster; and "Entrance upon the seventh circle constitutes a mortal creature a truly potential citizen of the local universe." (P. 1210)

Jesus entered the seventh circle upon the receipt of his Thought Adjuster at the age of four. Both of his parents were involved in his instruction in family discipline and practices and also Jewish beliefs, customs and traditions. This is in keeping with the tribal, family concept. At the age of seven, when Jesus entered school, he began to spend more time outside of the family, to establish relationships with schoolmates, and to "make contact with human nature from the four quarters of the earth as men from many lands passed in and out of his father's repair shop." (P. 1362) The second chakra or sixth circle represents our personal relationships with others, both human and divine. In Christianity, this is represented by the sacrament of Communion at the age of seven.

The Urantia Book describes Jesus' attempts to resolve the issues of the third chakra, or fifth circle – honor, integrity – between the ages of 12 and 14. "...Jesus suffered great mental distress as the result of his constant effort to adjust his personal views of religious practices and social amenities to the established beliefs of his parents. He was distraught by the conflict between the urge to be loyal to his own conviction

Psychic Circles	Chakras	Sacraments	Sefirot
7 Potential Universe Citizen	1 Tribal, Community	Baptism - Family	10 Sekhinah - Creation
6	2 Personal Relationships	Communion - Honor One Another	9 Yesod - Foundation
5	3 Self Self-esteem	Confirmation - Honor Yourself, Honor Code	8 & 7 Hod & Nezah Majesty & Endurance
4	4 Love	Marriage	6 Tif'eret - Beauty
3 Accept Divine Will	5 Will Will to God	Confession - Surrender Judgement & Mercy	5 & 4 Gevurah, Hesed
2	6 Mind, Clarity	Ordination	3 & 2 Binah, Hokhmah Understanding, Wisdom
1 Adjuster Contact	7 Oneness	Extreme Unction From Physical to Spiritual	1 Keter - Divine Energy

tions and the conscientious admonition of dutiful submission to his parents....” (P. 1372-3)

Has Jesus now moved into the fifth circle, or is he operating in all three of the outer circles simultaneously? As I compared the proposed meanings of the seven levels to various instances in Jesus’ life, it became apparent to me that his decisions and resulting actions always affected several levels simultaneously as he applied higher and higher meanings to each previous level, or circle. It appears that the boundaries of the circles begin to blur considerably as the individual integrates each new growth level into the preceding ones.

Is this why the authors of *The Urantia Book* don’t define all of the circles? It appears that we operate in all at once to a greater or lesser degree, all the way to the first. Even Adjuster contact (first circle) can happen in any circle, although it is rare before the later developmental stages.

We also know that we don’t really “complete” our circles even as we advance. From page 1191 of *The Urantia Book*: “What the Thought Adjuster cannot utilize in your present life, those truths which he cannot successfully transmit to the man of his betrothal, he will faithfully preserve for use in the next stage of existence, **just as he now carries over from circle to circle those items which he fails to register in the experience of the human subject, owing to the creature’s inability, or failure, to give a sufficient degree of co-operation.**” (Emphasis mine)

Perhaps our concept of being “in” any given circle refers not to the complete mastery of the previous level, but to a relative degree of mastery, or integration, of all previous levels and a balanced achievement of growth of the entire personality. “The successful traversal of these levels demands the harmonious functioning of the **entire personality**, not merely of some one phase thereof. The growth of the parts does not equal the true maturation of the whole; the parts really grow in proportion to the expansion of the entire self—the whole self—material, intellectual, and spiritual...By such a balanced growth does man ascend the circles of planetary progression one by one, from the seventh to the first.” (P. 1209)

In eastern tradition, the chakras are united into a single system of physical and spiritual energies. As one ascends from the first chakra through the seventh, the largely physical influence of the lower levels is increasingly dominated by the spiritual motivations of the higher ones. And from *The Urantia Book*, “The seven circles embrace mortal experience extending from the highest purely animal level to the lowest actual contactual morontia level of self-consciousness as a personality experience.” (P.1211)

In all three religious traditions, it is at the level of the third circle that the human will has been dedicated

to the divine will, marking a definitive stage of spiritual achievement. “From the seventh to the third circle there occurs increased and unified action of the seven adjutant mind-spirits in the task of weaning the mortal mind from its dependence on the realities of the material life mechanisms preparatory to increased introduction to morontia levels of existence.” (P. 1211)

Is it possible that the “completion” of all of these circles does not occur until that final moment following the traversal of the first circle, when all factors come together at once, when all levels are simultaneously completed as the last stage of Adjuster control is effected? Is this somehow a far-distant echo of the developmental stages of the Supreme, when he will be complete in one final moment of achievement, as all factors in his growth come to fulfillment simultaneously?

We are aware that even completion of the circles is not equal to Adjuster fusion. “...fusion depends on yet other greater and more sublime spiritual achievements, upon the attainment of a final and complete attunement of the mortal will with the will of God as it is resident in the Thought Adjuster.” (P. 1212) I have sometimes thought that circle completion versus fusion might be likened to wedding vows at the altar versus a 50-year marriage. After all, we are told: “numbers of decisions, frequent repetitions, persistent repetitions, are also essential to the **habit-forming certainty** of such reactions.” (P. 1210) (Emphasis mine)

The similarity of the various religious traditions of seven levels of spiritual achievement indicates that mankind has been aware of these truths since ancient times. Each culture interprets the meanings of these levels in a very similar manner, and they share the same purpose: the ascent of the individual from the lowest or physical stage of existence, through the emotional and intellectual levels to divine contact, oneness with Divinity.

We cannot find a better example of human progression through the circles than in *The Urantia Book*’s narrative of Jesus’ life. As we follow his development, his constant balancing of the various aspects of life as it is lived on this planet and co-ordination of all this with his determination to be subject to the will of the Father, we are inspired to act in our own lives with this same consecration of will.

Linda Buselli has been a reader for 28 years, and she and her husband Bob served as Area Coordinators for Indiana for many years. She is a member of the Publications Committee and now resides in Dallas, TX. Both children, Michael (24) and Gina (22) are active in the Urantia movement.

ON REMOVING THE BARRIER TO A CIVILIZED DISCUSSION OF EUGENICS

Stephen

(Note: The author has asked us to withhold his full identity to protect his professional status and connections. We are complying with his request. – Editors)

To begin to talk about eugenics – or any other subject that touches upon human nature – it is necessary to shed the straitjackets of ideology. At this time one is not allowed to argue the merits of eugenics, but is forced to argue the merits of having a value system at all. Those who would discuss heredity and culture today find themselves in the same position as those who would discuss religion: having to argue with a mentality that is, on principle, opposed to the very idea of objectively real values.

Eugenics, with its fundamental assertion of genetic inequality and of the desirability of encouraging some people to breed, and discouraging others, raises a double alarm in the contemporary mind. The first alarm has to do with its perceived attack upon the spiritual value of equality. Equality is the supreme value of the political pseudoreligion of the age – Rousseauism.

This alarm also rings on a philosophic level. The absolute value-neutrality to which liberalism aspires represents the implication that anything is better than anything else. Both aspects of this alarm (genetic inequality and value inequality) imply a hierarchy of values, something that equalitarianism cannot tolerate.

A free and open discussion of eugenics is blocked by the Rousseauist equalitarian ideology that dominates public discourse and tries to prevent *any* consideration of human differences. Of course, discussion is also dampened by revulsion against the horrors of Nazism, which hijacked the label of eugenics, and so cast disrepute upon it (see the postscript on anti-Semitism).

Rousseauist ideology disregards hereditary factors, believing solely in environmental factors and in the enlightened application of external coercion to indoctrinate the population in politically correct behavior. The only rescue from single-issue ideologies and the tyranny they bring is a recognition of the fact that both heredity and environment are important causative factors, and that there is a third element which eludes the potentially deterministic controls of heredity and environment. This third element will be discussed later in this paper.

ROUSSEAUISM

Rousseau is the godfather of the resentment-based utopianism and revolutionism that has afflicted western culture for the last two centuries and given birth to the most spectacularly disastrous pseudoreligion, Marxism. Rousseau's opinion of society is utterly negative, yet he has a fervent religious sentimentality about the purity of the human heart.

For Rousseau, society was to blame for all inequality and injustice. The cardinal sin is that society has "deviated from the state of nature." "Inequality (was) almost non-existent among men in the state of nature..It is iron and corn, which have civilized men, and ruined mankind."

Some examples of his fractured logic are:

- man is innocent and free, but the *association* of men in society is the source of all evil;
- society is utterly depraved, yet it may respond intelligently to the summons to moral regeneration, and if it embraces Rousseau's ideas, will even embody the gospel of Christ;
- social coercion has always been evil, but a Rousseauist society may coercively indoctrinate men in worthy social behavior; he writes, "the sovereign may banish from the State whoever does not believe" the principles of the civil religion.

Rousseau's Christian-flavored religion, then, is profoundly unbiblical, while his socialism is hostile to all social formations except those he would imagine.

Occasionally he gives honest expression to his hostility to Christianity. "A society of true Christians would no longer be a society of men" because of Christianity's pacifism and other-worldliness. "Christianity preaches only servitude and dependence. Its spirit is too favorable to tyranny for the latter not to profit by it always. True Christians are made to be slaves." Here we can see both Nietzsche and Marx glimmering in Rousseau's eye! Would that we could go back in time and warn Europe not to be seduced by this man!

His central revolt is against a biblical God. "The grandest ideas of the Divine nature come to us from reason only... Conscience never deceives us... The service God requires is of the heart... With regard to revelation... I neither accept nor reject it, I only reject all obligation to be convinced of its truth."

Here he shows his hand. If one believes in a revelation from God, one cannot be neutral about its messages. It seems that the highest reality for Rousseau is “the heart,” not God.

Nazism was largely a revolt against the Rousseauist milieu in Europe. In practice, both Marxism and Nazism have been profoundly anti-eugenic, notwithstanding that Nazis covered themselves with eugenic rhetoric while Marxists have repudiated it. Both have engaged in cephalocide: the killing of brains, that is, the systematic repression of independent thinkers and spiritual leaders. I focus in this paper upon left wing ideology not because it is more wrong than right-wing ideology but because the academy in America has been such a shameless defender of it.

According to Max Scheler, the psychological force behind Rousseau’s humanitarianism is *ressentiment*. “Humanitarian... ‘love of mankind’...levels to uniformity all the objective value-differences between man and man. It is not a spiritual act of the soul but a seething, intemperate sensual pathos...obliterating the unique God-ordained character of each individual, class, race or nation in favour of a homogenized world-puree of mankind. Once the common reference of all men to God is denied, and with it the final deepest and most effective interconnection of souls, their link in and through God, it is impossible to go on assuming any hierarchy of values to which our love should be directed in varying measure according to definite laws of preference.”

THE RELIGIOUS MEANING OF EQUALITY

American patriotic rhetoric involves a religious glorification of Equality, and this has accelerated with time. It is necessary to examine the philosophic error at the heart of the religion of equalitarianism. It is a confusion of spirit with matter. The fact is, all persons of moral decision-making capacity have the same spirit-endowment; we are all equally the children of God, and are equally invited to participate in the family of God. This is a spiritual principle transmitted to us by the letters of Paul and, even more so, the parables of Jesus. This *spiritual* truth, however, has been exploited by political thinkers in America, most influentially enshrined in a line of

Procreation was formerly a duty; in America currently it is conceived of as an absolute right.

Jefferson’s (“that all men are created equal”) and in Lincoln’s use of that idea.

As with many thinkers of his time, Jefferson believed in a unity of principles governing the material, intellectual and spiritual realms, and called this unity of principles “nature.” It would not have served his purpose to make a distinction between the equality that exists on the spirit-*potential* level and the inequality that prevails on all levels of *actuality* and on the intellectual and physical levels. His purpose was not philosophic but political, asserting the rights of the American gentry against the authority of the crown.

Likewise today, most of those who make equality a supreme ideal fail to distinguish between spiritual and material realities and between potentials and actuals. Equalitarianism is not a Christian value but a post-Christian or anti-Christian one. The basis of religious freedom is loyalty to the Creator, who brings out one’s potentials. Equalitarian freedom seeks freedom from all constraints; it is anti-parental resentment writ large.

There is a type of equality among persons, but it does not exist on the natural level. There is a tremendous natural *inequality* in physical and mental abilities. Equality is found *only* in the spiritual fact that we are all equally the children of God and have an equal right to begin to participate in eternal (and temporal) life.

Failure to understand this leads to the distorted equality claims of socialism. It is simplistic and false to think that all evil comes from the unequal distribution of wealth, and that all criminal behavior is merely a helpless response to environment. Along with this belief goes a false idea of citizenship: the claiming of rights without responsibilities, the notion that everyone is equally deserving of social rewards. This undermines the principle of social responsibility.

Genuine equal opportunity aids civilization by allowing talent to rise, regardless of race or class, and not by attempting to levelize everyone to a certain social average. Equalitarianism is an unexamined value. In fact it is composed of about equal parts of value-distortion and forlorn hope, of sentimentalized resentment and half-hearted good intentions.

Materialistic sociologies that attribute all human behavior to environment, denying heredity and free will, are paralleled by the politics of social engineering and a maternalistic dictatorship dedicated to coercive, mind-numbing nurturing.

Regarding Jefferson’s “created equal” remark, Lincoln asked “whether any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.” The answer is: not if it is conceived as literal material equality and the equality of ideas, because this requires the coercive suppression of

excellence and the rejection of values.

CAUSATION, IDEOLOGY, AND VALUES

All value distortions tend to be dualistic. The ideological opposition between environmental determinists and genetic determinists is an example of the common distortions of supposedly opposite camps. Mature philosophy recognizes the influence of environment *and* of heredity and *also* of the crucial third ingredient: spirituality and its mysterious energy of creative freedom. The origins and causes of human behavior can be grouped in three realms: environmental influence, hereditary endowment, and spirit-identification. These culminate in the three great human activities: work, wedlock, and worship. Temporal survival necessitates work. Biologic survival and social stability combine to require the existence of marriage. Personal survival of physical death requires faith, and when this is given, one worships. Work, wedlock, and worship can be used in the perfecting of personal life. And all three assist in the discharge of the greatest responsibility in this world: raising children.

All three involved a process of selection. Society, too, has selective prerogatives; individual rights are conditional. Irresponsible parenting can trigger society's right to restrict procreation.

A balanced philosophy must recognize the three-fold causation. Only a recognition of spirituality can prevent a decline into ideologies of absolute environmental or racial determinism. Only spirituality offers a true answer to the extremes of ideology. And the hostility of ideology to spirituality is shown by the evolution of torture in recent decades, the object of which has increasingly become not the obtaining of answers, but the destruction of the person, of individuality. Evidence of this nightmare trend rolls in from Russia, China, Chile, Uruguay, Iran. The last example shows how religious ideology can also participate in this assault upon the soul. Single-issue ideologies of any kind are a profound threat to human freedom.

Procreation was formerly a duty; in America currently it is conceived of as an absolute right. A more civilized viewpoint is that it is a privilege accompanied by supreme responsibility. Humanitarian concern is leading to recognition that irresponsible parenting inflicts terrible suffering on children and secondarily upon society, and that society has a right to withhold reproductive rights in some cases.

Most social values involve a eugenic aspect, but we are largely unconscious of the extent to which genetic strategies dominate our thinking. In light of prenatal counseling, of incest taboos, of sexual images and preferences and the other ways that reproductive decisions are influ-

We should approach eugenics only through a mature philosophy that recognizes the influences of nature, nurture, and eternity.

enced, it has been said that eugenics is already here. The question for us is what *kind* of eugenics shall we practice?

Over-rapid material change, anarchy among nations, and the scourge of thoughtless procreation are combining to destabilize societies. But there is hope for civilization if advancing mores can affect the process of child-rearing, mores which themselves have unconsciously benefited from religious idealism. But the process is undermined by intense ideological conflict and philosophic confusion.

We should approach eugenics only through a mature philosophy that recognizes the influences of nature, nurture, and eternity. The last ingredient is the domain of religion, and governments should not pay it much mind, but they also should not oppose it. And academics should not deny its existence, for if they do, they betray us into the hands of ideological determinists of the left or right.

POSTSCRIPT: CHRISTIAN ANTI-SEMITISM:

It is important to recognize that the dominant factor in Nazi ideology had nothing to do with eugenics or any other concept; it was emotive. It was anti-Semitism, that is, a form of religious derangement, the origin of which is dread and guilt arising from *Christian* doctrines of the sacrifice of the Son, and of the sacramental consumption of the Son by believers. A perceptive study of the Middle Ages reveals this. Confused by the contradiction between a loving God and a sacrificial God, the Christian projects his shame and blame onto an Other who stands for himself. Secret feelings of shame for drinking the Lord's blood led to attribution of blood-magic to Jews. Similarly, resentment against a God who made salvation dependent upon a ritual murder, and demanded that the murder be relived in liturgy, was the source of the myth of Jewish ritual murder of Christian children (the principal symbol of Christ in those days was the *Christ-child*). Dundes refers to this process as projective inversion. Among traditional cultures, Judaism has proven to be the most eugenic, but that is a subject for another paper. ■



THE BASKET

Charlene Morrow, Edmond OK

It happened on the very last Wednesday
Almost all the bright days were gone
It was a day of rest, as was their way
The master walked toward the hills alone

Guards were offered for him by David
Knowing that these were times of danger
But with legions of angels awaiting his bid
He had no fear of friend or stranger

He walked away, but in a short time
Was offered a basket of food for the day
He reached for the handle ready to climb
And turned to walk on his solitary way

John Mark held on to the basket
Gripping on firmly and strong
He'd made up his mind to carry it
If needed for all the day long

The apostles, they couldn't believe their eyes
They were shocked at the temerity of the lad
Deep in their hearts they could not deny
They were jealous, lonely, and sad

Later on Nathaniel spoke to them
And told them how they could each
Have had the chance to join him
If they'd wanted to be there in reach

Young John held on intently
The man could only smile
And look down upon him gently
Letting him come all the while

All the boy desired was the pleasure
Of ministering to his loved one
The yearning which no heart can measure
Since he felt as if he were a son

The two, they had such a good visit
The conversation, so private was it all
The master made comment of it
That to no one a word should fall

A unique day in time and space
But not so strange or odd
If any had wanted so badly could face
A day alone with God

SpiritQuest 2000

August 7 - 12, 1999

REGISTRATION FORM

Mail completed form and deposit to:

The Urantia Book

FELLOWSHIP

529 W. Wrightwood Ave.

Chicago, IL 60614

Phone: 773-327-0424

Fax: 773-327-6159

e-mail: fellowship@urantiabook.org

www.urantiabook.org

Please complete and return this form as soon as possible.



Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____ Evening Phone _____

City/Town _____ State/Province _____ Zip _____

Nation _____ Email _____ Fax _____

Full name for each member of your party. Please include ages for all children.

Last name	First Name	Child's Age:
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

REGISTRATION FEES: (Canadian dollar amounts reflect current exchange rates.)

ADULTS (21 and over)

CHILDREN (0-20)

Regular Registration (before 7/1/99)

Regular Registration (before 7/1/99)

\$105 US / \$155 CAN

\$70 US / \$102 CAN

Late Registration (after 7/1/99)

Late Registration (after 7/1/99)

\$125 US / \$183 CAN

\$90 US / \$132 CAN

ACCOMMODATIONS: The conference begins on Saturday, August 7 in the afternoon and concludes on Thursday, August 12 in the afternoon. Accommodations are available both before and after these dates for those wishing to come early and/or stay late. Costs vary from about \$25-\$50 US per person per night depending upon the type of accommodation selected. Small children may sleep on the floor in a parent room at no charge, but must provide their own bedding.

As soon as your registration form is received by *The Urantia Book Fellowship*, you will be sent a form for booking your room reservations at the University of British Columbia.

COMMUTERS: Please check if you will be commuting to attend IC99. (No lodging required) _____ persons

MEALS: Separate packages are offered for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The reduced rate meal plan for children under 10 years old provides smaller portions. The meal plan begins with dinner on Saturday, August 7 and concludes with breakfast on Thursday, August 12. Only breakfast is provided on Tuesday August 10, the conference free day. Please indicate your choices for meals.

	Number	Number
All 5 Breakfasts	Adults: \$23 US / \$33 CAN _____	Children: \$13 US / \$19 CAN _____
All 3 Lunches	Adults: \$17 US / \$25 CAN _____	Children: \$10 US / \$15 CAN _____
All 4 Dinners	Adults: \$37 US / \$54 CAN _____	Children: \$24 US / \$35 CAN _____

NOTE: ALL UBC HOUSING INCLUDES KITCHEN FACILITIES - refrigerator and stove, but no utensils. Those wishing to do so may use these facilities to prepare some or all of their own meals. If you plan to use these facilities to prepare some or all of your meals, please check here. _____

CLOSING LUNCHEON: The closing luncheon celebration on Thursday, Aug. 12 is not part of the meal plan. As this is the final event of the conference, it is strongly recommended that everyone take this option. Please indicate your choices below.

_____ Adults @ \$12 US / \$18 CAN _____ Children (6-20) @ \$5 US / \$7.50 CAN (Children under 6 free.)

TOTALS:

Total Registration Fees _____

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Closing Luncheon _____

Grand Total _____

If possible, please use a charge card to pay for your account. Use of a charge card greatly simplifies currency exchange. Mail or fax this registration form to *The Urantia Book Fellowship*. Thank you.

Method of Payment: Check or money order enclosed _____ Master Card _____ Visa _____

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IC 99

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PRE CONFERENCE RETREATS

Artists Retreat *Worship Through The Arts* August 5 - 7

Spiritual Retreat *Living In The Presence* August 4 - 7

Writers Retreat August 5 - 7

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Sat., Aug. 7 – Conference Registration and Evening Social

Sun., Aug. 8 – **QUEST FOR THE DIVINE PRESENCE**

Plenary Speaker: Gard Jameson

An Evening With The Master

Mon., Aug. 9 – **QUEST FOR THE TRUE FAMILY**

Plenary Speaker: Paul Snider

Tues., Aug. 10 – **REVERSION AND LEISURE DAY**

Tour beautiful British Columbia

Wed., Aug. 11 – **QUEST FOR SPIRITUAL CULTURE**

Plenary Speaker: David Kantor

August 12 – **QUEST FOR WORLDWIDE REVELATION**

Plenary Speakers: Paula Thompson, Janet Farrington Graham

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TIME AND TIME OUT

K. Brendi Poppel, Santa Barbara, CA

Time is a measure of material momentum,
But when time stands still...
The universe whispers a song to my soul,
For an instant my heart is fulfilled.
Here and there we can taste of eternity,
In the silent spaces where no time exists,
Where God speaks in the language of lovers,
Unlike the manipulations of materialists.
In the mechanistic mold which we have made,
Our days are divided into segmented spaces,
This business prevents the Spirit from penetrating
The prison we have built to encase us.

Time out from the tumult of non-stoppable action!
The never-ending traffic that pollutes our view,
Time out from the scheduled sequence we follow!
The essence of eternity can hardly break through ...
The cacophony we've created, the commotion and clatter,
We sabotage ourselves with meaningless chatter.

I behold you in love, and then do I see ...
Time suspended, transcended ... eternity ...
Where lives intertwine in the cosmic design,
With each one included in the indelibly divine
Pattern we perceive, the Masterful Plan,
Is a blueprint to believe beyond this life span ...
Time is but the beginning, our entry on earth,
A passage that presages our spiritual rebirth.
When we take time, we open the door
To the Spirit, who is waiting for the call,
To come into our hearts and transform our lives,
By opening our eyes to the WONDER OF IT ALL !!!

K. Brendi Poppel is a poet, songwriter, and watercolor artist who resides in Santa Barbara, California. Recently, she had the privilege of presenting an introduction to The Urantia Book at Border's Books and on local cable television. She has been a student of The Urantia Book for twenty-five years.

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