

JOURNAL



URANTIA.

A News Journal for Readers of The Urantia Book

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International Conference France, August 3-7, 2002

Dear friends and readers,

The Association Francophone des Lecteurs du *Livre d'Urantia* is especially pleased to invite you to attend the coming International Urantia Association conference which will be held in August 2002 near Paris. The setting is a comfortable Holiday Center amid a green landscape located in close proximity to Dourdan, a charming small medieval village.

The theme of this 2002 conference is:

"LIVING THE ASCENSION PLAN IN TERRESTRIAL EXPERIENCE"

This will be the second IUA international conference to be held outside of the USA and the hosting team is desirous to emphasize the international character of the Urantia movement as shown by the number of associations which have been founded in the past eight years.

We would like to seize this opportunity to highlight the diversity and richness of the readership coming from so many regions of the world. We hope to do this in two ways:

- * one is by having each continent participating in the content and spirit of the gathering.
- * and the other is by facilitating informal meetings which should lead to a joyful intermixing of concepts, of persons, and of nations.

Evenings will mainly be reserved for entertainment: music, poetry, songs, etc. Visiting a splendid 17th century chateau, and enjoying a gourmet's menu is also on the agenda.

English and French will be the two official languages of the conference.

However, to limit the language barrier problems, formal speeches will be restricted as much as possible. Moreover, we will do our utmost to have some translators help with the workshops.

Note: a simultaneous reading and remote transmission of the speeches into several languages is also under consideration.

Children and Youth

A special program should be provided for children and youth participation in the events of the adult conference and a recreational program including all the games available in the Holiday Center.

Location and Dates

The conference will be held from Saturday afternoon August 3 to Wednesday morning 7, August in the Holiday Center "Le Normont" in Dourdan, a small medieval village located 30 miles (55 km) south of Paris.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION IN ENGLISH:

WWW.IUA2002.com/index_en.html

The Gift

RICK WARREN, FT. WORTH, TEXAS, USA

It is utterly humbling to think of the dimensions of the revelation that has been dropped into my lap. If all books were to be weighed according to their significance, then *The Urantia Book* would command such gravity as an equally sized chunk of black hole.

When I first began reading there was excitement at having found the truth. Truth is a living breathing entity—this we know. And no book is more than a statement about truth as it is taken in snapshot fashion, reported by beings with only a partial grasp of reality and modified by the time and location whence it appears. But, to me, it is the Truth by Urantian standards.

As reading continues and the word picture which the revelation describes develops in my mind, the accumulating data also creates a shift in me, the viewer. Without knowing exactly when it occurred, the shift caused the newly perceived description to fill the vacuums in my mind, and not done even there, the fulfillment overtook the background and the foreground of perception. This is all, of course, at my urging, my continual reach for more light, more longing to touch the hem of God's cloak.

And in all this desire for growth, the Urantia revelation becomes a bottomless well of spiritual food. What will it be today, the beefy renderings in the middle of the book, the juicy cuttings about Paradise in the first course or the sweet dessert at the end?

Surely the revelators are not without regard for appreciation and it is with a greatly humbled heart and grateful soul that I thank them for the fifth epochal revelation and express my nameless gratitude for letting me in on the truth of God, the purpose of life and the knowledge of the reason for the existence of evil in an otherwise good universe.

My life's path began to change from the moment I picked up the revelation. It is fairly easy to surmise where I would be if I had not found the book. And that possible existence is better left un-lived compared to the forward looking, excitement filled, ever unfolding universe career that I am living in the eternity that the Father has fashioned out of nothing.

Thanks to all who brought the living waters to Urantia; it tastes good.

Meeting *Urantia Book* Readers in Panama

ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ, BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

This past November 12, I had the opportunity to share experiences and exchange ideas with four readers of *The Urantia Book* in the friendly cosmopolitan Panama City. This encounter was made possible thanks to the efforts of Robert Solone and Victor García-Bory from Urantia Foundation in Chicago, who provided me with the list of Panamanian readers.

We gathered in an Italian restaurant on the 50th Street, where we enjoyed the opportunity of beginning to know each other. They all represent different professions, such as electronics, advertising, and photography. I have later learned that they have kept meeting, which undoubtedly will, sooner or later, result in something beneficial. May God shed his light as they progress on the path of spiritual association, and who knows, we might very soon learn about the formation of new study groups, and possibly even of a Panamanian Urantia Association.

I also was able to visit a bookstore where *El Libro de Urantia* is sold, and the clerk explained that they had sold more than a hundred books in this bookstore alone. Let's hope that this enthusiasm to know the

book will be maintained, considering that Panama is a country of great spiritual and religious unrest. I have there had the opportunity to share with my Hindu, Muslim, and Baha'i brothers, who have very beautiful temples and well organized religious communities. Moreover, some of these temples are architectural jewels without equal in the hemisphere. The Baha'i temple on Columbus Street is one of only eight such temples in the entire world; each of them is a monument worth visiting. The Hindu temple lies on the top of a hill; its murals and its altar displaying a thicket of gods and ancient masters take the visitor to the stories of Ramayana.

It is not that only these religions which to us, western Christians, seem exotic would have their own temples. The density of churches in Panama City is such that in every five blocks it is possible to encounter an assembly hall of a church of this or that type. Most of them are Christian, constructed for the worship of our Heavenly Father. As a matter of fact, I feel emboldened to say that Panama may fulfil an important role in the ecumenical movement which is, with each day passing, growing stronger in the world.

Captured from the Internet

SEPPO KANERVA, HELSINKI, FINLAND

Urantia Foundation maintains Internet discussion lists for readers of *The Urantia Book*. It may be a piece of news to even some participants that there are lists in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Finnish. Just to give you a fleeting glimpse of what is transpiring on the other lists, I have selected here a small sample of an exchange of ideas that took place on the Finnish list roughly a year ago. The selected contributions represent only a small fraction of a long sequence. The discussion was initiated by Sinikka Lilja, who asked some provoking and “unorthodox” questions.

Matti Heinonen wrote in reply to Sinikka: “By means of her questions Sinikka once again presents an exacting challenge to us. Sinikka wrote: ‘In the book that I referred to, the good pastor asserts that God loves unselfishly, because, as the pastor asserts, all humans experience salvation and are translated to heaven. But as soon as we begin to study *The Urantia Book*, the pastor’s notion is revealed to be false. God does put conditions on everybody’s access to heaven. In the words of our book, you have to believe in God; that is, God expects us to show that we love him. And that is by no means the whole picture, for God presumes also that we seek his will and do it. Nothing less is good for him. On Paradise, God presupposes that we are perfect even as he is perfect. In short, I try to ask, what it means when we say that God loves unselfishly.’

“My take of the whole is that God does not exact anything from us. What he does, is that he gives us a chance of voluntarily participating with him in a project which could—as Mirja Syrjäläinen puts it in her comments—be viewed as a game. As is the case with regard to any earthly game, his game too is governed by certain rules. If we wish to run onto the field and take part in the game, the prerequisite is that we honour the rules of the game. The divine rules are, however, fair in the sense that we need not do anything more than gradually relinquish our imperfection. As is the case with all games, here too a patient, concentrated and easy-going attitude rather than strained pressing forward, is the key to success. It pays also to remember that the trophies of this game are princely

and that every participant gets a reward. What does God’s unselfish love mean in this context? It must mean that irrespective of whether we are ready or not to participate in the game and be part of the adventure, he will always love us. He loves the amateur just as much and just as perfectly as he loves the top professional, and even him whose choice is to stay in the bleachers or leave the scene altogether. Fully unselfishly.”

Risto Mäntynen, in his contribution, reminded everyone of the relationship which prevails between love and service: “There has been a lot of talk about love on this list; much less attention has been paid to what should be the consequence of love. Even in this respect, *The Urantia Book* is, in my view, very coherent. True love can but lead to genuine service.

“A loving attitude, a service attitude, cannot presume that the defaults of an individual or a community be ignored or swept under the carpet. Let’s say that an individual perpetrates a crime against his community; we may be sure that he doesn’t get away with it. Rather, the issue will be dealt with; the first step is to enter into rational discussion with the culprit, maybe even making an appeal to emotions. If the breach is repeated and no improvement in the perpetrator’s attitudes is forthcoming, the dealing of the case turns harsher. Later on, even warnings may be given. Warnings are delivered privately before they are brought to the knowledge of the group. It is a matter of wisdom how these warnings are delivered and how they are received.

“Should it happen that there is someone who has a chronic tendency to distort the truth and interpret the cosmic law in a manner that serves his selfish ends, it cannot be an expression of love if the issue is left at that. In my mind, it would be reasonable to condemn the error but to love the one who commits the error.

“In my view, it is a vain hope if someone expects love to express itself in everyday life as some kind of ecstasy, incessant high, or nirvana. In my personal view, love is an attitude, not so much an emotion, and this circumstance is not eclipsed by the fact that a loving attitude more often than not fosters mind’s

positive emotions, empathy, pleasure and enjoyment.

“Should anyone think that Jesus did not genuinely love his fellow men, he should read Part IV of *The Urantia Book* from the beginning to its end and find to his edification the staggering heights that love can reach on the fringes of the universe, on an evolving planet like Urantia.”

Eija Seppänen replied to Risto and the others: “In the definition of love which we find on page 1228:2, *In the true meaning of the word, love connotes mutual regard of whole personalities, whether human or divine or human and divine*, there are two aspects which I find utterly significant. The first one is ‘whole personality’ and the other ‘mutual regard.’ This may sound even somewhat dry — as if all feelings and passions had been squeezed out of it. But it is not true. In my view, rather the opposite is true. The sequence must be this: whole personality, mutual regard, love — and **then** we may welcome emotions and passions. This is intriguing. This is superthinking. If a broken personality’s sequence is this: first emotions and passions, which are believed to be love, the respective relationship will end up in misunderstandings, hatred, and in the worst scenario, a knife thrust hilt-deep in the other’s back — because ‘you don’t love me.’

“Whole personality finds definitions on many pages of *The Urantia Book*. These selections include, for example, the sequence titled, The Human Jesus (1424:5—1426:1), and the discussion on the seven psychic circles (1209:1—1212:1). The entire part IV talks about one whole personality, the human Michael of Nebadon.

“Because I myself have not attained my circles nor a wholeness of personality, I do not fully know what this kind of love would mean, but I view it as an ideal, which would be not only love but rather superlove.”

Kari Kuosmanen then made this statement: “It is a constant source of amazement to me to realise how different we humans can be. When I committed my thoughts on altruistic love into writing, I expected that it would be received with either noncommittal singing of praises by believers, or with complete silence: There’s no reason to comment on that. When Sinikka found support for her thoughts about the unavoidably reciprocal (to a certain extent selfish) nature of love, I was astonished —yet, not in a negative sense. When we endeavour to study an issue that

is greater than life, it is interesting to note that every individual puts much emphasis on those themes that are close to his heart. For one it is service that is essential, for another it is prayer or the contemplation of divine mysteries, and so on, almost indefinitely. Others again may be spiritual decathletes, who are attracted by virtually every aspect of the issue. I must confess that altruistic love has been a theme very dear to me. My eventual conclusion is that there truly is not any love other than altruistic love; selfishness is virtually the very opposite of love. It is not my wish to hit anybody on the head, not even with a soft-cover *Urantia Book*, but this is a quote that I endorse to the fullest:

You are destined to live a narrow and mean life if you learn to love only those who love you. Human love may indeed be reciprocal, but divine love is outgoing in all its satisfaction-seeking. The less of love in any creature’s nature, the greater the love need, and the more does divine love seek to satisfy such need. Love is never self-seeking, and it cannot be self-bestowed. Divine love cannot be self-contained; it must be unselfishly bestowed. [1739:6]

“The quotation sets for all of us the correct readings of the compass and the true objectives, in our endeavours to grow in love for the fellow man.

“This next quotation does, in my humble opinion, spur us effectively forward:

You cannot truly love your fellows by a mere act of the will. Love is only born of thoroughgoing understanding of your neighbor’s motives and sentiments. It is not so important to love all men today as it is that each day you learn to love one more of your fellows, and if this is the limit of your ability, then you are certainly socializing and truly spiritualizing your personality. Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious. If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man. [1098:3]

“It is hard to expand those words with anything, except for a statement that they are absolutely true.”

25 years of work: Introducing *The Urantia Book* to the Danish Population.

JEAN ASCHER, DENMARK

The first 10 plus years I read *The Urantia Book* more than twice and hardly talked to anybody about it. Or perhaps I mentioned it to a few friends and relatives, but nobody became in the least bit interested. One said that the book was the most complicated mixture of science and fiction she had ever seen. She called the book “the world’s largest written hotchpotch of amalgamated nonsense and facts.” Another said that if this book was really the fifth revelation, then why did not the world already know about it? It could hardly be a divine revelation since hardly anybody knew about it.

First I would like to say that whatever I hereby have written is my personal opinion. I am not an expert in Christianity or in the complicated psychological complexities of the Danish mind, soul and spirit. Most of the Danes are members of the Christian state church and pay their dues together with their taxes, but very rarely do they go to the church, except when they get married, when their children get confirmation, and when they die. The Christian church here in Denmark is well organized and established, and in my experience, Danes simply do not talk about their religious feelings. When subjects about Christianity come up, most Christians will either say it really cannot be explained or that they simply do not want to talk about it.

After approximately a decade I began to speak more openly to friends and relatives. I gave *The Urantia Book* as gifts to people over these years who seemed interested. I participated in various national conferences, met new people and turned them on by simply being able to explain certain difficult facts that they themselves had never been able to understand.

Anonymously I sent quite a few *Urantia Books* to various Danish people who were all involved in theology, Bible translation, and studying of religion. These people were public officials all working with Christianity. They had written Biblical dictionaries, were teaching at the country's universities and were outspoken

through the news media. These people who received a book anonymously from me could have found out very easily who had sent it, if they had wanted to find out. Urantia Foundation has my permission to give out my name and address to readers.

But all this did not make even one reader. People stocked the book away on their shelves, never to read it as far as I know. If some of these people are reading *The Urantia Book* secretly, then they will somehow sooner or later come forward, but as of now, not a word for 10 years.

In the beginning of the 90s I contacted Copenhagen Theological University with the intent to find a few students interested in helping me with the work of translating *The Urantia Book*. I put messages on their bulletin board, but nobody responded. I made a visit to one of the highest ranking theologians working with Bible exegeses. We talked and I told him in a very friendly manner of *The Urantia Book*, but he did not even want to see the book (I had it in a little suitcase next to me). For him, the Bible is the only real word of God. Therefore *The Urantia Book* must be heresy.

In my search into the background of *The Urantia Book* I came across the information of what the revelators had said concerning Christmas. It gave me an idea. I formulated an approach, a letter to 120 churches, half in Copenhagen and the other half in Odense. The letter suggested that the church and I work together in creating a Christmas mass where the congregation could honor various peacemakers in the world, such as: Adam and Eve, Seth, Enoch, Enok (Henok), Machiventa Melchizedek, Amenemope, Ikhnaton, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, Elihu, Samuel, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaac. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, Daniel, Haggai, Malachi, Gautama Siddharta, Confucius, Lao Tse, Zarathustra, Pindar, Xenofon, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotele, John the Baptist, Jesus of Nazareth, Abner, Apostle John, The Women Corps (Jesus), The 70 Evangelists, Rodan of Alexandria,

Stephen, Paul from Tarsus, Philo of Alexandria, Barnabas, Athanasius, Clement of Alexandria, Mohammed, Martin Luther, Guru Nanak.

Further I suggested that together we write a new "Lord's Prayer." My intent was to translate a few ones from *The Urantia Book* and then present the church with the text. At no point did I tell them about *The Urantia Book*. The idea was to create an open mass for all people regardless of color, creed and race. It was supposed to be a one evening event where people could come directly in from the streets and participate in a peace mass, honoring the men and women who during their life had done a lot of peace work for mankind. I received various very angry letters in return and out of 120 invitations not one responded positively.

Never give up.

I wrote an article to the four largest newspapers in this country, a 6-page article called "Happy Birthday, Jesus." It was written as if I was Jesus' **real** brother and that he had left the planet and I his brother was now telling him about what the people in Denmark were doing in their celebration of him. It was Christmas time. My article was turned down by all four newspapers without an explanation. Perhaps my writing abilities and language were way below normal standard! Or perhaps the newspapers weren't interested in a different perspective.

Stand up and fight for your rights.

Now I decided to go public. You see, I am a performer/artist/jester and well known in Denmark, so whenever a newspaper called and wanted a little story or interview about my circus, I tried to weave various information into the text. A few years ago I was even photographed on the front cover of the second largest newspaper's cultural page, sitting in my garden reading *The Urantia Book*. The story was about me as one out of 50, an extraordinary unusual man, so I had the freedom to say quite a lot—which I did. I had expected some people to respond, but nobody in all of Denmark reacted. The newspaper was printed in approximately half a million copies.

Difficulties may challenge mediocrity and defeat the fearful, but they only stimulate the true children of the Most Highs. [556:7]

By now I was well versed in the reaction of the Danish people to *The Urantia Book*. So I decided to start a public study group. I got access to a public room in a community house in Odense and made public through bulletin boards and newspapers that I was interested in people who were studying philosophy, cosmology and religion. For three hours each Wednesday for three months I sat waiting for people (and did a lot of reading myself). All together four people showed up, and out of them only one ever returned. This man bought *The Urantia Book* and disappeared after three or four visits, not to show up again until four years later, in the spring of 2000.

Mankind has been slow to learn that there is not necessarily any relationship between purposes and results. Human beings are only just beginning to realize that the reactions of existence appear between acts and their consequences.[951:5]

During the years from 1995 until 2000 I worked on translation, but at the beginning of year 2000, the person mentioned before rang one day and said that he was ready now to join me in my work of introducing *The Urantia Book* to the Danish population. We coined the word Durantia for the Danish Urantia Study group

The Study group Durantia went to work. The two of us wanted to get some more people interested, to start a study group. We invited approximately 20 of our closest friends to a meeting in my friend's home. We had prepared an agenda, brought pictures along (the ones from Jesusonian Foundation, John Byron Universe art series and the Epochal Revelation), secondary books like Study Aid for part IV, *The Concordex*, and *The Paramony*, and the newest edition of *The Urantia Book* for sale at import price. All together eleven of us spent a nice evening together, and we sold two books.

Approximately six months later we repeated the introductory meeting, but this time in a public community house, where approximately 40 people were personally invited. Only two showed up.

And again in 2001 approximately nine months later, we repeated our introductory meeting, and again in the same public community house, where approximately 60 people were personally invited. This time four showed up. Two left after an hour and the last two stayed until we decided to go home.

The information of these two last introductory meetings was sent to the four largest national newspapers, but none of them printed a line.

The Queen of Denmark had her 60th birthday in May this year, and we decided to give her a big hard-cover version. This book was signed by us and delivered directly to the Royal castle in Copenhagen on the morning of her celebration.

I have also attempted library placement. I contacted the six largest libraries in Denmark. Today three of them have *The Urantia Book* on their shelves: the royal library in Copenhagen, the Theological University in Århus and the University of Ålborg. The other three turned down the offer. One of them, the Odense University (the second largest in Denmark) argued that since nobody for the last many years had asked for the book, there was no interest in such a book. Further they (the chief librarians) argued that since the book was free of charge and since nobody had ever asked for it, it properly was of no interest to the students of their university.

Approximately 25 *Urantia Books* have been distributed over the last 10 years in Denmark to private people, friends and persons who somehow in their own field and work have showed in interest in knowledge, understanding and wisdom of this universe. A few contacts have been done via the internet, but still out of nearly 25 years of introducing *The Urantia Book*, only one person has shown a real honest serious motivation. If this is because of how I do it or something in the psyche of the Danish people, I do not know.

My contacts with hundreds of Danes (people interested in cosmic understanding, knowledge and wisdom) over the last 25 years have taught me that they, like other people, often are uptight about their inner selves; at times they simply ignore the invitation to share and communicate. They seem to have enough in themselves. They are like lonely ships on a stormy ocean, depending solely and only on their radio contact to the land operator, the so-called social state. Any ship which happens to come by is looked upon as a pirate vessel, invaders of the mind, spirit and soul.

As you grow older in years and more experienced in the affairs of the kingdom, are you becoming more tactful in dealing with troublesome mortals and more tolerant in living with stubborn associates? Tact is the fulcrum of social leverage, and tolerance is the earmark of a great soul. [1740:5]

Also as a part of my life as a performer I have come in relative close contacts with members of the black race, especially the Rastafarians. Through research and study (living the life) into the Rastafarian philosophy and wisdom, it occurs to me that there are quite a lot of similarities between the teaching of *The Urantia Book* and Rasta. Both talk about Oneness, One people, One God, One love, One aim, One destiny. The fact that certain Rastas smoke marijuana and consider it to be a divine herb should not distract you from the reality that lots of deeply involved Rastas live a life without it. They, like I, get a natural high on living the divine way, the natural way in harmony and peace with the One and everything. Giving more than what one takes. Sharing the wealth of your labor with your brethren. Respecting and worshipping the most high Creator of an everlasting living Universe.

The fact of the cosmic mind explains the kinship of various types of human and superhuman minds. Not only are kindred spirits attracted to each other, but kindred minds are also very fraternal and inclined towards cooperation the one with the other. Human minds are sometimes observed to be running in channels of astonishing similarity and inexplicable agreement. [191:6]

Evolutionary religions and revelatory religions may differ markedly in method, but in motive there is great similarity. Religion is not a specific function of life; rather is it a mode of living. [1100:3]

When one mortal is in full agreement with the religious philosophy of a fellow mortal, that phenomenon indicates that these two beings have had a similar religious experience touching the matters concerned in their similarity of philosophic religious interpretation. [1130:1]

* * * * *

I continue to use the knowledge and wisdom of *The Urantia Book* in my circus performances. I have for the last 21 years had my living and income from live performances with my ChangHigh circus, a youth unicycle circus who does everything on one wheel that everybody else does on two feet and a little more. We travel around Scandinavia and Europe and perform at festivals, carnivals, on streets and indoors for various corporations.

I created a circus act called "Mental Strip Tease." Several young children and I are on high giraffes (that's what we call unicycles 2-3 meters tall), and we are dressed with seven different T-shirts, each with a pic-

ture in front. I then do a rap to each T-shirt and off it goes. The seven subjects in the rap concerns:

- (1) The Races: that it does not matter of what color, creed or gender you are; we all belong together as the people of this earth.
- (2) Health: We all live our lives in a body, so please take really good care of it. Don't smoke or drink or poison yourself. Who wants to be a garbage can!
- (3) Superstition: There are quite a lot of confusing beliefs on this planet, but you the people should know that there are no stars, planets or UFOs that have any influence over you and your life. The only ones who have influence are yourself, life and God. Anything else is occult mystic nonsense.
- (3) Plant Life: We live on a green planet with quite a lot of different flowers, bushes and trees in all the rainbow' s colors from where we all get our energy. So please take good care of it all, so your grandchildren can live as healthy as you do today.
- (5) Animal Life: There are quite a lot of different animals in all different kinds of shapes, colors and characters, so take good care of them whether they sit on top of your head or they growl at you, because without the animals you would not be here.
- (6) Nationality: There are approximately 250 countries on this planet and even they all don't live in peace and brotherhood. I ask you to go into your neighbors next door and say hello. As far as I can understand, then the only way to bring peace and good will among men is to get to know the ones you do not know.
- (7) God: There are more than 400 different faiths here on this earth, but you should all acknowledge that God really doesn't really care what faith you believe in or what you call the creator as long as you recognize that there is just One.

And last I end up saying Vern Grimsley's well known text: All humankind is one vast family, this

world our home. We sleep beneath one roof, the starry sky. We warm ourselves before one hearth, the blazing sun. Upon one floor of soil we stand and breathe one air and drink one water and walk the night beneath one luminescent moon. The children of one God we are and brothers of one blood and members of one world-wide Family of God.

This act is impressive to the audience, and they like it without knowing from where the knowledge comes.

* * * * *

A quarter of a century working in Denmark with the introduction of *The Urantia Book* has given me an experience that would never have been possible in any other way. I have come to learn to like and love the human differentiation. To accept and understand that change within the human mind is solely dependent upon inner motivation and one's free will to transform oneself, away from animalistic primitive human concepts forward into divinely spiritual godly concepts.

If one becomes conscious of the will of God through life, then one must choose to do the will of God. There is a real and unique experience in the transformation of oneself from purely human to partly godlike. This transformation or amalgamation is one's real living work on earth. As an amalgamator one has to fuse one's human will with the will of God. Our human embryo contains the potentials and ingredients needed for this uplifting and uprising of our souls into the harmony with our Universal Father, the Originator and Highest Chief Creator of all living creatures. My experience has taught me to be more than patient and tolerant. It has given me insight into forgiveness and loving acceptance of any wrongdoer.

So stay universal and in harmony on top of the wheel of Life and let your divine Cosmic Consciousness and divine intelligence guide you through the Labyrinth of Love.

Let us all carry on the good work. I send my best regards and hope to see you all sometime, somewhere, somehow within the future of the seventh superuniverse or beyond.

What *The Urantia Book* Means to Me.

JAMES PERRY, NORTH CAROLINA, USA

In my attempt to share with you my thoughts on what *The Urantia Book* means to me, I think that it will prove helpful if I share with you some of the high points of my life since I have had the privilege of studying *The Urantia Book*. Since *The Urantia Book* has had differing meanings and values for me during the times that I have been exposed to it, perhaps if I tell the story from the perspective of my life journey with this book, I may be able to convey to you a more accurate picture of how the meanings and values have grown in my life since my encounter with *The Urantia Book*.

It is Fall 1976, about mid-October, and I have been into my medical internship about four-and-a-half months. I have not yet mastered the art of interning, and consequently spend a lot of time during routine chores when I am on call at night. It is about 3 a.m., and I am responding to a call from the nurse to check on a patient. As I make my way to the nurse's station, my mind quickly reviews the possible solution to the problem that I have been presented with, fighting the need for sleep all the time, and hoping that I will get maybe a couple of hours of sleep before the new work day starts. I arrive at the nurses' station and discover there is no one there to greet me. I look around and spot a small office, a short distance back away from the counter, in a corner. There I observe the nurse deeply engaged in reading a big blue book. I ask her what she is reading. Her response is not very descriptive of what she is reading. She says something to the effect that this book is "something else," and is really "mind blowing" and that her friends, even a psychiatrist thinks this book "is out of this world." I ask her if I may look at it momentarily, and she readily hands me the book. I look briefly through the table of contents and see that it is a book that talks about God and the Universe. I also notice that there is a section in the book that chronicles the life of Jesus.

My immediate impression of this book is that this is a book that I would like to have, not that I am overly impressed with the information in it, but rather that this is a nice book to add to my collection of other esoteric books that I am in the process of collecting.

You see, at this time, in addition to my medical training, I am pursuing so-called occult literature, and I am primarily involved in the search for knowledge that will allow me to alter reality without going through the altering experience. I had read many, many times in my study of occult literature that there was power out there to be had by anyone if one just took the time to find out how to use it. I had studied and studied, but never did find the secret of securing the power of God without securing his wisdom as well. All in all, this pursuit of trying to find the power without the wisdom of God was a frustrating effort, but it did whet my appetite for truth.

I hand her back the book and inquire how I may obtain such a book. She asks me if I know where the YES bookstore is in Georgetown, and I reply that I do not. She volunteers to get a book for me the next time she is in that area. I see her several times after that but never in that particular setting where I was first introduced to *The Urantia Book*. On several occasions I ask if she has had a chance to get the book for me. She replies that she has been so busy that she has not had time to go to the bookstore. Well, it is now June, several months having gone by, and one Friday evening after getting off work, I decide that I will find this bookstore and get a book for myself. It is a very warm and humid evening. After getting some directions, I head for the bookstore located in Georgetown. On my way to the bookstore, I get a flat tire on the 14th Street Bridge in Washington, D.C., a very busy bridge, about 7 p.m. I finally get the tire changed, after a policeman pulls up behind me and asks if everything is okay. The first thought that comes to my mind after going through the flat tire crisis is to abandon the idea of going to the YES bookstore and to return home. But I am determined to get this book that I thought contained the power of God without his wisdom. Finally after about another 30 minutes, I pull up along side the curb of the YES bookstore. I go in and ask if they have a book called Urantia. The clerk seems to be familiar with the book and goes right to it. I think I paid about \$27 for the book at that time. It is now about 9 p.m., and by the time I get home it is about 10 p.m. I sit down and begin to read this big blue book. I read

the words Central Universe, Superuniverse, and Local Universe, and immediately I associate these terms with the Big Bang Theory of the universe. Over the next few weeks, I read the Foreword, the papers on the Universal Father, the Eternal Son, the Infinite Spirit, the Trinity and parts of the Isle of Paradise. I only read part because the more I read the more incomprehensible the reading becomes. It is as if I am trying to climb a steep rugged mountain. The words are in English, but their meaning eludes my grasp. I am disappointed that I do not find this secret knowledge that would give me the power of God without his wisdom.

There the matter rested for about three years. This episode was my introduction to *The Urantia Book* and to the truth that I had sought in my heart, but my mind failed to recognize it when it was finally made available. At this point *The Urantia Book*, to my conscious mind, was just another book, admittedly the largest book in my collection of so-called occult literature. The value of this book to me at this time was purely potential. It was much like our mortal life—the embryo of the next life, a vestibule of life, if you will. I have since learned that during this period of my confrontation with *The Urantia Book*, my divine spirit was assuming the function of Thought Adjuster. This was the period where, increasingly, my concepts of truth, beauty, goodness, and love were being adjusted to higher and higher divine levels.

It is now 1980, three years before my 40th birthday, and three years before the change in function of my Thought Adjuster to Thought Controller. I am practicing in a rural clinic in North Carolina, not very far from where we are meeting today and not far from where I was born. I am having a very difficult time morally and spiritually. I seemed to have lost purpose, and have become confused morally. I am slowly sinking into a deep depression, and I fear that the worst awaits me. Becoming a physician, though satisfying intellectually, does not seem to satisfy vast other parts of my being, the needs of which have been gradually exerting themselves from mere whispers to shouts that drown out everything else that in the past had brought me so much satisfaction. My moral will appears to be trapped in some kind of paralyzing vise, and it seems the more I struggle, the tighter the vise tightens its grip. Soon my moral free will appears to be vibrating only barely.

Into this disintegrating personal experience, my beloved aunt appears and begins to minister to me

through kindness and concern. She eventually persuades me to go to church. As she says, she feels there might be something said there that might help. And so I begin the Christian part of my adult life: I had started out as a Christian when I was a teenager, having confessed Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and had been baptized. But in looking back over that event from this point, I did not see the relevance of it. It just appeared to be an emotional appeal. As far as I was able to discern, it did not have the slightest material consequence in my life nor in the lives of its practitioners as I had been taught that it would. Those poor souls, later to realize that they were truly rich, remained materially poor. But they kept teaching by faith that material prosperity was the smile of God. And this is still taught today. I was content to remain in this teaching, but when my mother died leaving me and six other dependent children, my mind stumbled over this teaching, and I left the faith, and for awhile did not pursue anything. But my aunt is right here beside me all the way. She explains to me in a simple but profound way that God is love. And of course I had heard this declaration that God is love many times before, but it had never resonated in my soul like this before. I had never been able to differentiate God's love from human love. She explains to me the difference between human love, which often degenerates into hate when frustrated, and divine love, which does not.

She explains divine love to me by saying that love (divine) is like someone holding a brittle egg, handling it so carefully so as not to bruise or break it. I am sure this explanation had such a momentous impact on me because she was actually involved in the merciful privilege of revealing to me that God is love. One Easter Sunday while at church with my aunt sitting by my side (she sat beside me every Sunday as if she were lending me her spirit), I hear that never-to-be-forgotten sermon. In this sermon, the pastor describes Jesus dying on the cross, looking down at his mother. And the pastor says, "Don't you know that Jesus knows how you feel?" Something happens at that moment, and I begin to recover from the moral and spiritual paralysis. The moral and spiritual vise is shattered as I realize that I am not alone in this moral and spiritual morass. I realize that Jesus loves me. Of course I realize now that the seeds had already been sown. What I was seeing was the harvesting of the fruit of those seeds.

From that moment, I vow to live my life for God, which later on becomes the dedication of my will to doing the Father's will. At least I feel like I can con-

tinue on through this awesome struggle. So I begin to immerse myself in religion and Bible study, prayer meetings and church services. Prayer becomes the watchword of my life. I pray every opportunity I get. I spend so much time on my knees praying that they become so sore, I am unable to continue in that material humble attitude. My prayer sessions shift from praying on my knees to sitting in a chair or standing and walking. And I begin to visualize myself with absolute moral and spiritual security in this huge spiritual hand of God as I move through my days and nights. And though the philosophy of the materialistic relations with God is still preached and taught, I now know that this is error from my previous experience as a child. I am determined to discover just what the truth of my relationship with God is. As I study the life of Jesus in the New Testament, I realize that I am studying a fragmentary record.

It is at this time, that I recall that I have a blue book with the life of Jesus in it. I begin to read the Life of Jesus from this book in earnest, and find that I cannot put it down. Not only do I comprehend what I am reading, but this reading is like the Balm of Gilead, such healing power for my soul. I am intoxicated with this new knowledge, and can hardly think about anything else. But as I continue to read, two things begin to happen: The reading of the Life of Jesus keeps referring to other personalities and events that lay elsewhere in the book. I am gradually drawn back to the front of the book where I begin to read it from the beginning, a practice that I have continued throughout the years that I have been studying, and I am amazed that I am comprehending what is being taught. The other experience is not so easy to resolve. As you might imagine, there are quite a few statements in the book that contradict Biblical positions: the virgin birth, the concept of original sin, the idea of Jesus dying for mankind's sin to appease an angry God. I do not know how to resolve these issues. In keeping with the spirit of the prophets of the Old Testament, one night I decide to sleep with *The Urantia Book* under my pillow with the hope that I will have a divine dream that will tell me the truth about *The Urantia Book*. Well, I go to sleep that night and to my knowledge I don't remember dreaming at all. *The Urantia Book* has fallen on the floor, but by this time the intellectual beauty and the spirit appeal of the book has a firm grasp upon my mind and soul. I started out with the intent of using *The Urantia Book* to supply missing information from the Bible, and I finished studying *The Urantia Book* exclusively for information about God and our Universe,

and my place in it. The validity of truth is such that it leads to more progressive truth; it can be experienced. It was not at all like the occult literature that I had studied with such earnestness, always feeling that the next book might hold the secret.

It is during this period that I, along with a friend, form a study group, and we begin the process of trying to attract others to the study of this book. We meet every Monday night and we study for 2 hours from 8 to 10 p.m.. This is a very exciting period, getting familiar with the new concepts, finding answers to questions that had plagued me, and also discovering some of God's wisdom and his spiritual power. I am on fire with this revelation, and just know that everybody would want this information. I begin to appreciate that nurse's comments now. But I am sadly disillusioned when I discover that not everyone wants this information; in fact most people that I approach do not want this information at all. Through sad experience, I soon learn to bridle my enthusiasm for sharing *The Urantia Book*.

In evolutionary beings God's wisdom is imparted as a result of wrestling with the giants of disappointment, and his spiritual power is made available immediately, but, oh, does it take time to learn how to skillfully use this power! Now I am hit with the full impact of the value of this book. Here I learn the intellectual meaning of what it means to do the Father's will with the repeated admonition that I should pursue the doing of the Father's will, not only intellectually, but spiritually. Here I find the intellectual mercy and comfort that I have been seeking. I learn that while misjudgments, decisional error, moral immaturity, and freely indulging the natural urges of the flesh may be evil, they are hardly sinful. I learn the difference between good, evil, sin, and iniquity. But most important of all I learn that I am a son of God, a spiritual child, maybe even an embryo, but nevertheless a son of the Heavenly Father who loves me with an infinite and eternal affection.

It is now 1983 and I am 40. The Thought Adjuster has changed in function to the Thought Controller. My thoughts have now been elevated to divine levels and remain there. My soul, while not completing its growth, has completed the capacity for growth in the flesh. This book lures me into the spiritual adventure of finding the Heavenly Father, and becoming perfect in the process. This book issues all sorts of spiritual challenges. Now I am beginning to realize the depth of

the values and meaning concealed in this book, as reading it discloses greater and greater values and meanings. I am reading the same words, but the words mean something entirely different. There are times that I come upon certain phrases that shake the very foundation of my soul, so sweet and powerful they are. Here are a few of them :

These are the mortals who have been commanded by the Universal Father, "Be you perfect, even as I am perfect." The Father has bestowed himself upon you, placed his own spirit within you; therefore does he demand ultimate perfection of you. . ." [449:2]

Here is an explanation of eternity: *To me it seems more fitting, for purposes of explanation to the mortal mind, to conceive of eternity as a cycle and the eternal purpose as an endless circle, a cycle of eternity in some way synchronized with the transient material cycles of time. As regards the sectors of time connected with, and forming a part of, the cycle of eternity, we are forced to recognize that such temporary epochs are born, live, and die just as the temporary beings of time are born, live, and die.* [364:6]

And then I read a spiritual explanation of why most human beings die. *Most human beings die because, having failed to achieve the spirit level of Adjuster fusion, the metamorphosis of death constitutes the only possible procedure whereby they may escape the fetters of time and the bonds of material creation, thereby being enabled to strike spiritual step with the progressive procession of eternity. Having survived the trial life of time and material existence, it becomes possible for you to continue on in touch with, even as a part of, eternity, swinging on forever with the worlds of space around the circle of the eternal ages.* [3650:0]

I read the awe inspiring paragraph that states the possibility of achievement for a mortal like myself, and I get goose pimples. *Younger planets may delay system unification, but this does not in the least handicap the progress of an older and advanced world. Neither can environmental limitations, even on an isolated world, thwart the personal attainment of the individual mortal; Jesus of Nazareth, as a man among men, personally achieved the status of light and life over nineteen hundred years ago on Urantia* [635:9]. My take on this is that individuals living in this age may delay the group from achieving the status of light and life, but the group cannot prevent the personal spiritual attainment of any single individual dedicated to doing the Father's will. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, if you only believe!

And then the introduction to destiny. *After the attainment of the supreme satisfaction of the fullness of worship, you are qualified for admission to the Corps of the Finality. The ascendant career is well-nigh finished, and the seventh jubilee prepares for celebration. The first jubilee marked the mortal agreement with the Thought Adjuster when the purpose to survive was sealed; the second was the awakening in the morontia life; the third was the fusion with the Thought Adjuster; the fourth was the awakening in Havona; the fifth celebrated the finding of the Universal Father; and the sixth jubilee was the occasion of the Paradise awakening from the final transit slumber of time. The seventh jubilee marks entrance into the mortal finaliter corps and the beginning of the eternity service. The attainment of the seventh stage of spirit realization by a finaliter will probably signalize the celebration of the first of the jubilees of eternity.* [305:1]

I read about superacting Adjusters. *The superacting Adjusters are those who have achieved the conquest of their intrusted tasks and only await the dissolution of the material-life vehicle or the translation of the immortal soul* [1197:2]. Referring to self-acting Adjusters, The Solitary Messenger says: *Has a subject who has made the supreme decision, has entered into a solemn and sincere betrothal with the Adjuster. The Adjuster looks beforehand to the time of actual fusion and reckons the union as an event of fact* [1196:6]. Now this is really mind-blowing. That I could actually live this life in relationship with my Adjuster as if I were fused with him! After reading that, the only thing logically to do is to embrace the fact of fusion as a goal of this mortal life which after much doubt as to the wisdom of setting this goal I actually do. During this period my mind is constantly flooded with new meanings. I attempt to write most of them down since they burned in my mind like a bright flame.

It is now 1986, and I have been studying *The Urantia Book* religiously for about six years, reading it about 3- 4 times per year. Then tragedy strikes in the form of illness to my wife and myself. At one time we are both in the bed ill at the same time with a small child to care for. I am thrust into the vestibule of middle age with its increasing infirmities and am literally forced to suspend my study group activities on the one hand and forced to stop my individual study on the other, due to a painful neuromuscular condition. It literally is extremely painful to hold my head down or to look up, and I remain in this valley of despair for five years. I continue to pray and wonder what in the world is going on spiritually in my life, since conscious

prayer is becoming almost impossible. I am having increasing difficulty focusing on my thoughts, difficulty forming the expressions that I want to express. Before I can get to the end of one thought, the whole thing vanishes like a puff of smoke. This continues until mental exhaustion forces me to stop altogether. And so it is with my physical afflictions. Before I can get over one affliction and am hit with another, driving me to the point of physical exhaustion. I am now learning that it is the motivation that counts and words or thoughts are only the conscious vehicle of travel, a vehicle that may not resemble anything similar to what it started as when the Thought Controller finishes with it. I am now being deprived of the psychological comfort of consciously knowing what I wish to express.

This is a difficult period. Having entered the phase where my divine spirit becomes known as a Thought Controller, I wonder what thoughts he is controlling at this time, since I don't seem to do a lot of conscious spiritual thinking. I am unable to. I want to think divine thoughts, but they will not come. But this is an amazing period of growth for me spiritually as I more fully realize that as intellectually satisfying as it is to contemplate and discuss the concepts of *The Urantia Book*, it is the display of the fruits of the spirit that supplies the power for the spiritual appeal. And during this period of intense emotional and physical suffering, the light of the fruits of the spirit burns brightly. This is also a difficult period professionally. This year finds me working in a new environment, the environment of the Federal Prison. I had often thought about working in a prison and ministering to the inmates there, for at this time I still believe that if individuals can only be presented with the loving concern of the Father, they would surely reform their conduct and habits—but, Oh, I am so wrong. Again what an eye-opener this experience is, as I painfully discover that there really are individuals who enjoy being bad. I recall from *The Urantia Book* the conversation Jesus had with Ganid:

“Ganid, the man was not hungry for truth. He was not dissatisfied with himself. He was not ready to ask for help, and the eyes of his mind were not open to receive light for the soul. That man was not ripe for the harvest of salvation; he must be allowed more time for the trials and difficulties of life to prepare him for the reception of wisdom and higher learning. Or, if we could have him live with us, we might by our lives show him the Father in heaven, and thus would he become so attracted by our lives as sons of God that he would be constrained to inquire about our Father. You cannot reveal God to those

who do not seek for him; you cannot lead unwilling souls into the joys of salvation. Man must become hungry for truth as a result of the experiences of living, or he must desire to know God as the result of contact with the lives of those who are acquainted with the divine Father before another human being can act as the means of leading such a fellow mortal to the Father in heaven. . .” [1466:2]

Also this quote comes to mind: *One error of human thinking respecting these problems consists in the idea that all evolutionary mortals on an evolving planet would choose to enter upon the Paradise career if sin had not cursed their world. The ability to decline survival does not date from the times of the Lucifer rebellion. Mortal man has always possessed the endowment of free-will choice regarding the Paradise career.* [620:1]

This is a distressing experience for me, and I begin to wonder that perhaps my being here is all in vain. On top of the physical suffering is now added emotional suffering, as I feel that I have been dropped along the highway of abandonment. I recall from *The Urantia Book* this quote of spiritual encouragement for those times of confusion and uncertainty:

Having started out on the way of life everlasting, having accepted the assignment and received your orders to advance, do not fear the dangers of human forgetfulness and mortal inconstancy, do not be troubled with doubts of failure or by perplexing confusion, do not falter and question your status and standing, for in every dark hour, at every crossroad in the forward struggle, the Spirit of Truth will always speak, saying, “This is the way.” [383:2]

One night something happens that reconnects me to my spiritual purpose. I am attending another one of those never-ending conferences sponsored by the Bureau of Prisons. One night while looking out my hotel window, I look down into a park below that is lit by many lamps. A thought strikes me, and the implications are so staggering to my mind that I can hardly believe it: I am one of the lights in the darkness of the prison that I am working in. And I realize that my revelation of the Father's love and his mercy is not so much for the inmates as it is for the employees, some of whom are very close to committing ethical and moral suicide, not to mention spiritual destruction. Some of them are making the grievous mistake of using corporate power and responsibility to personally punish inmates.

Again I recall from *The Urantia Book*: *In all the administrative work of a local universe no high trust is deemed more sacred than that reposed in a Planetary Prince who assumes responsibility for the welfare and guidance of the evolving mortals on a newly inhabited world. And of all forms of evil, none are more destructive of personality status than betrayal of trust and disloyalty to one's confiding friends. . .* [754:5]. The fact that corporate employees are entrusted with securing, maintaining and protecting inmates who are carrying out various penalties for the infractions of society's rules does not change that. I keep insisting to them that they are not to take the inmate's behavior personally. An inmate is just being an inmate.

Here I learn a new lesson in faith and trust. I learn that because I am dedicated to doing the Father's will, nothing can interfere with this process. Here I become more familiar with the long-suffering aspect of the Father's character. Here I recognize that the Father suffers disappointment and sorrow. Here I realize that the Father is not only joyous, peaceful, and happy, but he also suffers as well, as he shares all of my suffering along with me. Here the aspect of his character for suffering, which is only potential in the Central Universe, becomes an actual reality in my life as I begin to discover new aspects of his character. He really does feel the pain that I experience and continue to experience. Jesus talks about this aspect of the Father's character when he spoke of *those who were poor in spirit, hungered after righteousness, endured meekness, and who were pure in heart*.

Such spirit-discerning mortals could be expected to attain such levels of divine selflessness as to be able to attempt the amazing exercise of fatherly affection; that even as mourners they would be empowered to show mercy, promote peace, and endure persecutions, and throughout all of these trying situations to love even unlovely mankind with a fatherly love. A father's affection can attain levels of devotion that immeasurably transcend a brother's affection. [1573:7]

The Father is my ever-present friend and helper, and always encourages me to transcend all material limitations. I realize that I can show love to my brothers and sisters, no matter what is going on. This is the birth of Fatherly love in my soul.

And then I read these inspiring words: *The confusion and turmoil of Urantia do not signify that the Paradise Rulers lack either interest or ability to manage*

affairs differently. The Creators are possessed of full power to make Urantia a veritable paradise, but such an Eden would not contribute to the development of those strong, noble, and experienced characters which the Gods are so surely forging out on your world between the anvils of necessity and the hammers of anguish. Your anxieties and sorrows, your trials and disappointments, are just as much a part of the divine plan on your sphere as are the exquisite perfection and infinite adaptation of all things to their supreme purpose on the worlds of the central and perfect universe. [258:11]

It is now 1991. I still have lingering physical difficulties, but now I transcend them. I am now in a new experience, working in a new environment. I am working on a military base, treating military dependents and military retirees. And this is a wonderful experience, as I meet a wide variety of people of different nationalities. Here I further socialize my personality, as I learn to relate to, and to love, people who are very different, culturally. Here I find some fertile ground for the Urantia Teaching, and meet some people who are extremely happy to receive *The Urantia Book*. Here the value of *The Urantia Book* takes on an enlarging value as I contemplate the trip of Jesus around the Mediterranean meeting all kinds of people. In a sense, I feel that I am doing that, in the spiritual sense. I really rejoice to see certain parallels. I cannot travel around the Mediterranean basin like he did, but I meet people who have lived all over the world. I even meet a lady who was born in a tepee. Here I begin to more fully appreciate the value of *The Urantia Book*.

It is now 1993, and again I am back in the community of rural North Carolina practicing medicine. I have completed a marvelous experience and am extremely exhilarated by the new meanings and values that have become a part of me, and I feel like something of a spiritual climax has been reached. I remember these quotes from *The Urantia Book*:

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 experience. From the third circle onward the adjutant influence progressively diminishes. [1211:5]

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. The mastery of the first cosmic circle signalizes the attainment of premorontia mortal maturity and marks the termination of the conjoint ministry of the adjutant mind-spirits as an exclusive influence of mind action in the human personality. Beyond the first circle, mind becomes increasingly akin to the intelligence of the morontia stage of evolution, the conjoined ministry of the cosmic mind and the superadjutant endowment of the Creative Spirit of a local universe. [1211:6]

In the choosing of truth, beauty, and goodness, the mortal mind enters upon its premorontia universe career under the tutelage of the seven adjutant mind-spirits unified under the direction of the spirit of wisdom. Subsequently, upon the completion of the seven circles of premorontia attainment, the superimposition of the endowment of morontia mind upon adjutant mind initiates the prespiritual or morontia career of local universe progression. [1237:1]

I wonder if something like this is happening in my experience now.

It is now 1994, and I am attending my first International Urantia Association Conference at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, the first of three that I attend serially. I am very excited at having an opportunity to meet and talk to some participants of this conference. It is a real emotional high to discuss the Urantia teachings with like-minded brothers and sisters. I agree with the assessment of one of the brothers there who says this conference is like a mansion world experience. I attend Conferences in 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2000. I enjoy them all, especially the opportunity to talk to like-minded brothers and sisters.

And now *The Urantia Book* provides guidance for that which is upon us. It is now 2001. A few short weeks ago, our nation and our world ended as we know it. The attack on the World Trade Center and introduction of terrorism into our country by foreign individuals destroys the sense of security of our citizens, and propels us into a nightmare of anguish, dread, and confusion. This experience, along with the government's self-defense response to it, is now accelerating the progress towards a global government, and people are now examining their religious beliefs and waking up to the realization that they need an intimate relationship with the Father. No longer are the old

concepts adequate for this horrible experience that has been thrust upon us. We now really do want to know if the Father exists, and if we can have a personal relationship with him. Too many of our brothers and sisters have abandoned the religions of fear without accepting the religions of love. Such a catastrophic event has propelled them back into the religions of fear which will not satisfy their soul's need for spiritual security, and they will subsequently be propelled forward into a searching that will not be complete until they are safely in the arms of the religion of love—the religion of the spirit.

I remember reading from *The Urantia Book* concerning the problem of embracing the religion of the spirit:

Selfish men and women simply will not pay such a price for even the greatest spiritual treasure ever offered mortal man. Only when man has become sufficiently disillusioned by the sorrowful disappointments attendant upon the foolish and deceptive pursuits of selfishness, and subsequent to the discovery of the barrenness of formalized religion, will he be disposed to turn wholeheartedly to the gospel of the kingdom, the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. [2083:3]

And now, brothers and sisters, I believe the time is upon us when shortly there will be an outpouring of hungry souls, desperately seeking to know the truth about God and his relationship to them.

And finally, brothers and sisters, as I try to comprehend the magnitude of this disaster and the necessary self-defense response of our government with its potential for worldwide disaster, I am comforted by this quote from *The Urantia Book*:

After such spiritual attainment, whether secured by gradual growth or specific crisis, there occurs a new orientation of personality as well as the development of a new standard of values. Such spirit-born individuals are so remotivated in life that they can calmly stand by while their fondest ambitions perish and their keenest hopes crash; they positively know that such catastrophes are but the redirecting cataclysms which wreck one's temporal creations preliminary to the rearing of the more noble and enduring realities of a new and more sublime level of universe attainment. [1096:5]

Reflections of A Student

GARD JAMESON, NEVADA, USA

The other day I came across the following article written for the *Journal of URANTIA Brotherhood* in the Fall of 1984. This article was born out of a crisis within the movement of that time. We are again in crisis, with believers pitted against believers, with observers wondering how the lofty ideals of this book could ever be served by our behavior and attitudes. There are histories being written to justify one viewpoint over and against the other. There are public denunciations of the revelatory commission and the revelation in order to “free” *The Urantia Book*. People are being asked, directly or indirectly, to choose sides, to choose friendships and relationships.

The article of 1984 arose as a result of the realization that until we are willing to engage the depth of the power of the Spirit of Truth and the Holy Spirit, “*Not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit*” [380:7], we will never find peace in our outer world. Until we are willing to muster the powers of compassion through communion within our souls, we will continue to abuse each other in our relationships. Many have not yet understood that the discovery of *The Urantia Book* means a monumental spiritual task for each one of us. This task is not a website, a newsletter or even a conference; it is the heartfelt commitment by each of us to learn how to pray without ceasing, to learn how to respect differing viewpoints, to learn how to find the immense fields of gratitude that exist in the midst of our differences and to submit ourselves to the transforming fire of communion with God’s spirit.

The Urantia Book seems to indicate that reality unfolds within a soul that is:

- **Deeply humble** before the diversity within our universe and before one another,
- **Hungry** for a deeper form of compassion and wisdom in all our relationships,
- **Willing** to engage the powers of dialogue at all crossroads,
- **Willing** to deeply listen and learn from one another, and
- **Sincere** in our desire to share our inner lives with God.

We have observed incredible expressions of self-righteous behavior on both sides of our divided community. We have observed remarkable projections of “evil” intent from both sides of our divided community. All of this behavior, to the extent that any of us engage in it, reflects the fact that we have not yet taken seriously the great task of faith set before us.

The Urantia Book supports differing viewpoints. It seems to suggest that history has a way of synthesizing opposing viewpoints over time, only to give way to new oppositional viewpoints. History seems to suggest that one of the greatest evils emerges from the motivation of wanting to destroy or negate the oppositional viewpoint; witness the Inquisition. Opposing viewpoints may indeed become deep wells of creativity if we can learn to live with the tension of the opposites, the paradox of antipodal viewpoints.

Opposing viewpoints should not engender a lack of kindness or patience. Opposing perspectives should inspire us to be more than just tolerant with one another, to recognize our sacred obligation to one another, to the sacred brotherhood of believers, that is referred to as our primary obligation.

We read on page 1930 that during Jesus’ *last free day on earth as a divine Son incarnated in the flesh* [1929:1] Jesus said to about fifty of his trusted apostles and disciples, “*As faith-enlightened and spirit-liberated sons of the kingdom of heaven, you face a double responsibility of duty to man and duty to God while you voluntarily assume a third and sacred obligation: service to the brotherhood of God-knowing believers*” [1930:2].

Consider this question: Why did Jesus not get involved in the disputes between Jesus’ and John’s followers?

For me the answer lies on page 383:2, *at every crossroad in the forward struggle, the Spirit of Truth will always speak, saying, “This is the way.”* Jesus is that Spirit of Truth; he is the Living Way for each of us in the task before us. He chose not to take a side in their dispute, but rather to set an example of a **way forward** in spite of the differences.

I wish to challenge each of us in our brief time ahead on this planet to learn how to make our lives one of unceasing prayer, dedicated to being kinder with one another, searching for the wisdom in each of our relationships, guided by a deep relationship with the Spirit of Truth present in every one of our hearts.

*From the Journal of URANTIA Brotherhood
Fall, 1984*

Spiritual Idolatry

“Never make idols...

You shall not bow down to any images

Nor worship them in any way,

For I am the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 5:8

The human mind is a factory of idol creation. We, as individuals, revel in the creation of idols, for they provide a most convenient avenue of escaping our encounter with Reality. Some of us are more sophisticated than others in the creation of idols, both material and conceptual. The sophisticated idol has the appearance of being in line with our sense of spiritual reality, and thus has the ability to lull us into a false sense of spiritual security. Less sophisticated idols take the material form of drugs, alcohol, sex, wealth, and the conceptual form of conceit, fame, power, to name but a few of the forms.

What is it that creates the idol? Most of us, when thinking of idols, are prone to think of some religious object that is worshipped, called *direct idolatry* [946:7] in *The Urantia Book*. More pernicious than *direct idolatry* is *indirect idolatry* as “immoderate attachment or devotion to something,” be it material or conceptual. The idol is created by the mind that—due to its insincerity, indolence, indecision, indifference, or lack of courageous faith—seeks something less than God’s perfect will through the direct experience of the Father’s Indwelling Presence, and the sincere desire to manifest that experience in loving service.

Idolatry displaces communion

Idolatry is known, then, by its effect of displacing our communion with the Universal Father, our Indwelling Friend. The idol’s power may temporarily or permanently impair our spiritual growth. The value of this writing, hopefully, is to make us sensitive to the fact that most of our minds are constantly attempting

to create a more effective idol which will enable us to avoid dealing with our real need for direct spiritual communion with the Father’s Indwelling Presence. The result of sophisticated idolatry is that is increasingly successful in creating a sense of spiritual self-satisfaction; the avoidance of direct communion with the Father’s Indwelling Presence becomes comfortable to us. The study group, the ministry, the social function begin to suffice, and cover the longing for personal communion with the Father.

We are reminded often in *The Urantia Book* of our neglect of the importance of the practice of true communion. In my personal experience I have learned how such “spiritual activities” as “the work,” “the ministry,” are able to displace the experience and importance of worshipful communion on a group and individual level. The sense of being part of a work that was associated with an epochal revelation was allowed to displace, more often than not, the necessity of communion with the spiritual realities in and around us. No matter what institutional ministry we are a part of, “theological arrogance” stalks us all, so long as we avoid our worshipful connection. Our dependence upon “the work” of our institution may become for us an intermediary in our communion with the Universal Father, and results in that *idolatrous hesitation* [1013:7] which impedes our spiritual growth, and the real success of the work which we deem to be so important.

Engage in daily communion

No matter what work we are a part of, whether it be secular or spiritual, we should never compromise our duty to keep alive our sacred channels of communication with the Universal Father. Let us not isolate ourselves from our Truest Friend and Companion. In these days of secular uncertainty, it is particularly important that each of us engage in daily communion, for a sufficient period, so that we can become wise spiritual beacons in our communities, providing hope to those who despair, living faith to those who doubt, and spiritual joy to those who sorrow.

Let us therefore remember always to engage in our daily worship before we go to our work, so that our light may shine and glorify our Father.

Postscript

The events of September 11 make very clear that every serious student of *The Urantia Book* needs to step up to the monumental spiritual task that confronts

each of us. This is the time for increased ministry, but that ministry can only be real to the extent that the Spirit of Truth, the Indwelling Presence of the Father and Holy Spirit breathe life into it, to the extent that we are sharing our inner lives, continuously, with the spiritual blessing which surrounds and indwells us.

One of the realities that few have owned up to is that we cannot get away from one another. We are interdependent, all of us, in this work, even with differing perspectives. Jesus knew this about his apostles and John's disciples; he knows this about us. To the extent that people have committed their lives to the ministry inspired by this revelation, their lives are inextricably intertwined with the lives of every other believer, whether they be Fellowship, IUA or non-aligned. The fact is that we are all aligned from the vantage point of our overseers and it is time that we mature into the fullness of that realization. I can recall conversations where the topic was: "If we could just get away from that other group so that we could do 'our work.'" The truth is that we will never "get away from that other group." That is not how the universe is structured; that is not what the family of God entails.

Not only do we need each other in these endeavors, it is the course of our divine destiny that our differences in temperament and perspective will be worked out in time. And we all must be about that work during our precious few moments here on the planet.

The social outreach of the Urantia Revelation by all groups has a major task of ministry, to expand the "leavening influence" of *The Urantia Book*. That leaven works from within and has the capacity to bless the whole. Let us not make the mistake of underestimating the power of that "leavening influence." To be effective we must all reach deeply inward to experience the spiritual resources that will make our ministries effective. We must show the world the fruits of the spirit, by being more patient and kind, by helping one another along the journey, by being open to wisdom from whatever direction it might come. This soulful task will require all of the courage that each of us can bring forth. I pray that we have that courage. For our world is greatly in need of the epochal perspective of this blessed book and of the fruits of the spirit that are born by a life lived in faith.

News about *The Urantia Book* Internet School

English, Spanish and French Courses

It is with pleasure that we announce that UBIS courses are now being presented in three languages. The *English* Winter semester is now in progress with 52 students enrolled in three courses. The *French* course will be in progress during March/April, and the two *Spanish* courses will begin on March 11. We are grateful to Carolina Arana (Spanish) and Guy Viau (French) for their services as the Spanish and French Administrators for the UBIS. The *English* Spring Semester begins on April 22, details for which will be announced on the Urantia Foundation website on March 25.

A Service Opportunity

The UBIS needs teachers. A typical note on many registrations says:

"I found *The Urantia Book* about a year ago and have been reading it by myself daily ever since. I am so happy to find that there are courses being offered on the Urantia Foundation web site. This will be my first contact with others who read the book."

Registration continues to grow, and among them are many readers who are making their first contact with other readers. Their enthusiasm in sharing their insights for the first time with others is truly heartwarming. The UBIS Teacher/Facilitators are finding this service a real joy. This is an invitation to all to come and join us in this educational outreach service. The UBIS looks forward to hearing from experienced readers who have an interest in this service opportunity.

In friendship,
Dorothy Elder, Director - UBIS
delder03@sprynet.com

The Challenge of Translation

JEAN ROYER, FRANCE

In his article “The Impossible 28012th Master Architect and Absonty” (*IUA Journal*, December 2001, p. 16) our friend Jeanmarie Chaise makes a number of remarks about the use of the word “eventuate” and its derivatives. If he has every right not to be satisfied with the French translation of the word, I would like, in turn, to make some remarks about what he writes.

He writes that the word “eventuation” should be kept in the translations into other languages. That seems to be the exact opposite of the policy of the midwayers. On page 350:6 they tell us that they use the verb “eventuate” to avoid using a new term, which is in conformity with the declaration of page 1:2:

We have been instructed to introduce new terms only when the concept to be portrayed finds no terminology in English which can be employed to convey such a new concept partially or even with more or less distortion of meaning.

If the midwayers have translated, why should we not translate?

Chaise writes that the Anglo-Saxons understand the verb “eventuate” as meaning “to happen in the the end, to result.”

That is the traditional meaning, the one which may help having a basis for a limited understanding, and it is sometimes found in the book, for example at 468:2 “*modifications of space-force which eventuate in energy.*” But, in relation to transcendentalers, if the Anglo-Saxons keep to this meaning, which I doubt they do, they still have a long way to go to make sense out of *The Urantia Book*.

What is required is a new acceptance of the words, but one which, for reasons of mind limitations, will not be given a satisfactory definition. Transcendentalers are subject to God the Ultimate, but our understanding is limited to, at best, the Supreme. Therefore, their existence can be revealed, but their mode of existence is beyond our time-space reach.

The same goes for the French “exterioriser.” If the reader stays with the traditional meaning, it won’t make sense, but if he thinks in terms of root meaning, he will come out with something which will ring a bell in his mind, even if he can’t define it any further.

Some persons have noted that “eventuate” has a sort of understood time reference in its root whereas the French “exterioriser” has a space connotation, and this seems to worry them, but it should not. This kind of transfer is quite frequent. An English speaker will use the phrase “the time when” or “the day when,” but a French speaker will use “le temps où, le jour où” (the time where, the day where).

Chaise also writes that transcendentalers don’t come out of anything; rather do they appear as a consequence of creation.

Sorry, but, with the due exception of the primeval cause of causes, the one uncaused, I can’t imagine those beings who wouldn’t come out of anything. Would you say that the Infinite Spirit does not come out of anything, because he is *the unique personal consequence of the everlasting Father-Son union* [110:2]?

Transcendentals are subinfinite and subabsolute but superfinite and supercreatural. Transcendentals eventuate as an integrating level correlating the supervalues of absolutes with the maximum values of finites. From the creature standpoint, that which is transcendental would appear to have eventuated as a consequence of the finite; from the eternity viewpoint, in anticipation of the finite; and there are those who have considered it as a "pre-echo" of the finite. [1159:6]

My personal opinion is more a question than an answer. These beings (transcendentalers) seem to correspond to what ancient philosophy referred to as “emanations.” So why didn’t *The Urantia Book* use the verb “to emanate” and the noun “emanation”? Is it because they wanted to keep these for physical radiation? Is it to prevent quarrels over the gnostic and neo-Plotinian interpretations of these words?

More Parables

By Readers of

The Urantia Book

At a study symposium in Nashville, Tennessee, USA, in May 1999, participants were asked to write original parables illustrating some aspect of the kingdom of heaven. A few of the shorter parables were printed in the December 1999 *Journal*. Here are a few more.

The Pet

Almost every human being has some one thing which is held on to as a pet evil, and which the entrance into the kingdom of heaven requires as a part of the price of admission. [1802:3]

Once there was a world famous animal trainer who was renowned the world over for her ability to train lions and tigers. It was truly remarkable what she was able to get those big cats to do. Asked once in an interview if she was afraid of them, she replied: "Although they seem tame, I always remember that they are wild animals."

As the years went by, the lion tamer got a little lonely and decided that she needed a pet. It seemed silly, however, for a world famous lion tamer to have a Yorkshire terrier, a goldfish, or house cat. She really liked the big cats. So when one of tigers died giving birth, she decided to raise the cub herself.

It was really a cute little kitty and a lot of fun. Since she was so close to it, she was able to get it to do even more amazing tricks than her other big cats could do.

One time, after a few months, in a playful moment, the cat clawed her rather badly. Just to be safe, she had it declawed.

A few months later, the tiger playfully bit her arm, and she had to have 14 stitches. Just to be safe, she had it defanged.

She loved this tiger and couldn't understand when her friends refused to come over to visit when the cat was loose in the house.

One day the pet tiger killed her. It was, after all, a wild animal.

* * * * *

The King's Son

There was a king of a small kingdom who understood the meaning of wise rulership. His son, the heir to the throne, had expected to be treated like all the other princes of the nearby kingdoms. He was royalty and he knew it, and he enjoyed being revered by his people.

The king, seeing that his son was enjoying being a prince too much, decided to require that his son work in the fields like all of his other subjects. The young prince resented this very much. He knew that all of his princely peers enjoyed a life of ease. However, after years of working with his subjects, he came to know and respect them in ways that he never knew possible. He finally understood the importance of hard work. He realized that his kingdom was great because of his subjects, not because he was their prince. When the time came for the prince to assume the throne, he was prepared to rule with a real understanding love for his subjects.

Many times out in the fields, as a young man the prince would curse his father for what he thought was cruel treatment and denial of his birthright, but as he sat on the throne working for the future of his kingdom, he praised his father for preparing him so well for the awesome task of leadership.

* * * * *

The Trumpet

Billy was a lonely boy. He didn't have many friends and spent most of his time by himself. "I wish I could find a way to be happy," he would often think. He often thought that if he ever found the answer he would share it with the world.

Then one day Billie's uncle gave him an old trumpet. Billy could not believe his eyes! This was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen. He found great joy in playing his trumpet over and over. So much so that he felt compelled to share his gift with others. So Billy would take his trumpet into where his parents were while they were entertaining friends. "Look what I've found!" said Billy. And with that he played the loudest notes he could, thinking all the while how cool it was and how great it was to share. "Billy! Would you please be quiet!" his mother extolled. "We're trying to have an adult conversation here."

Billy didn't get it. Why could no one see how cool his trumpet was? He tried with other people, thinking that maybe his parents just didn't understand. But he would usually get the same results. Even his friends thought he was a little goofy. It seemed no one could see the beauty of it.

With that Billy decided that regardless of what others thought he was going to spend as much time with his trumpet as he could.

As time passed, Billy began to learn more and more about his trumpet. And after much practice he even began to learn the nuances of the instrument and how to make it sing. Billy had begun to devote his whole life to his trumpet.

Eventually, through constant choice, Billy became a master of his trumpet. Soon people were coming to hear him play, and many folks were moved to tears by the simple but elegant beauty that his music conveyed.

One day at the end of one of Billy's concerts a man was heard to say, "I often have wondered if a God in heaven exists at all. After hearing this man tonight, I know there is and that he must love us indeed for such beauty to exist."

* * * * *

Up From the Mud

There was once a colony of mudbugs that lived in the bottom of a pond. They were all fascinated by a light that shone on the surface of the water periodically. When they asked each other about the light, the older, more knowledgeable ones would mention that there was another world up there, and that many of their brightest, strongest, and most promising had ventured up there, never to return, so no one really knew what that world looked like.

A group of the teenagers made a pact that they would try to make it to the unseen world, but they promised to come back and tell the others. Now, one day one of them decided to start up a reed stem for the new world.

It was a very long climb, but when he had broken the surface, he beheld an amazing new world, with vegetation and flowers on the surface of the water in the form of lily pods, many more reeds, waving in a sea of straw, and heard new sounds of birds chirping and frogs croaking, and felt a new experience of wind and warmth from the sun. As he sat on the reed, he became very sleepy, for his climb had been exhausting, and he fell asleep.

When he awoke, he found, to his horror, that his body had stiffened into a chrysalis and he could not move. But he stretched and fought until he broke the surface of his skin and climbed out, to find he had a new body, and had turned into a dragonfly with some things like the wings of the birds.

As he stretched his new wings out, the breeze caught him and took him aloft. He began flapping his wings in an effort to regain his balance, and found, by experimenting, that he could direct his flight. As he landed on another reed, he peered into the water, and could barely make out some of the mudbugs below. But instinctively he knew that he could not return as he had promised in the new body, so with a bittersweet mixture of sorrow at never being able to see his friends again or to say goodbye or to tell them about this amazing new world, he flew off with joy to explore his new life.

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