



William Wentworth

With the passing of another annual conference, this time hosted by the Melbourne Study Group, I found myself reflecting on the importance of the annual conference to me, and I suspect to most of us who had the pleasure of attending.

To spend a few days in the company of other Urantia Book readers is so refreshing that it seems to invigorate me for months afterwards. Whatever help we can provide to furthering interest in the revelation, in bringing a spiritual message to our area of influence, to making whatever small improvements in things we can—all of these things are done mostly in isolation from our fellow readers. As we attempt to live our understanding of the revelation in our daily lives, we do so in a social environment where we must explain and justify our acts and utterances to friends and neighbours who do not understand, and have no interest in the source of our inspiration. We are thus faced daily with the need to guard our tongues, to think and assess before we speak our minds, to calculate whether it is wise to mention this or that controversial point. And although we do this with joy in the spirit of service, it does result in a certain strain deriving from the frustration of being unable really to share our vision with the world at large.

What fun it is, then, to converse and interact with

other readers who know what we are trying to do, for whom many tedious explanations are not necessary, and who accept our speculations as sensible and normal. How constructive it is to discuss differences of interpretation, to seek clarification of obscure concepts, to offer and receive help in understanding the revelation with others as focused as ourselves. And to do it while renewing old acquaintances and making new ones in an atmosphere of such goodwill, makes the conference such an important part of life. It sends us back to the daily grind invigorated with a renewed determination to struggle with ourselves, to serve our fellows, and try ever harder to live the Father's will. >>

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Host countries compete for conference

Notice on the RC list from Merindi Swadling, Australia:

the ISB Conference Chair – Eddie King, received two proposals from National associations interested in hosting the 2009 International Conference... Spain and Canada.

Never before, in the UAI, have we had two national associations "bidding" for the international event. This is truly a wonderful thing, and perhaps in the years to come we will have three, four or five nationals willing to face the challenge of holding an international event.

Today, in Seattle, the ISB has voted to award the 2009 International Conference to Urantia Association of Spain.

In our opinion, both Canada and Spain would be wonderful locations for our 2009 conference. Our main reasons for choosing Spain were:

- *We have not yet had an international conference in a Spanish speaking-country.*
- *There is momentum growing in Europe at the moment with two new associations (Belgium and Sweden) and the new Italian translation. Holding the event in Europe will allow us to take advantage of this momentum and attract readers from other European nations.*

I pray that you understand our reasoning and join me in congratulating Olga, Eduardo and their Spanish team.

Please share this decision with your membership, and encourage them to start making plans to travel to the south of Spain in April 2009.

In loving service

Merindi Swadling

RC Chair

The UB, a thousand year project?

Notice on the UAI list from Mark Kurtz, USA:

Dear fellow readers,

I want to share two paragraphs below of a recent email with a new reader friend.

From JP: "From the many things you shared to us about the UB there is one topic that I'd like a little more explanation: You said that there will be a long period of one thousand years through which the UB will be known

President's message

continued from page 1

The annual conference is sponsored by ANZURA as an important event for readers in Australia and New Zealand and the ANZURA Annual General Meeting is held at the conference. This year was the first meeting since the inauguration of the Strategic Plan initiated in response to that of Urantia Association International. There is still a long way to go, but a start has been made.

Robert Coenraads and Trevor Swadling have been holding the positions of Vice President and Treasurer on a temporary basis, and their positions were formalised at the meeting. The ANZURA board now consists of:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| President: | William Wentworth |
| Vice President: | Robert Coenraads |
| Secretary: | Rita Schaad |
| Treasurer: | Trevor Swadling |
| NZ Representative | Neville Twist |

Thanks to Melbourne for a wonderful conference. We look forward to Canberra next year.

and assimilated by human beings. After that amount of time Lucifer will be judged, then the end.

My questions are: Are these two events related? Are those thousand years the same mentioned in the book of Revelations in the Bible? If that's the case, year 1935 or (1955) becomes crucially important in World History. Where in the UB can I read about the thousand years?"

These questions come from a recent visit. I told him I would share these-questions with friends and invite comments. Are there UAI List members who would like to address his questions?

I responded to these questions, but now I think others could add more. The thousand years he mentions is what I told him that others told me over many years. I hope its not just hearsay!

Thanks.

Mark Kurtz

Answer 1–Kari Kuosmanen, Finland

Where you have got this kind of information. I have read TUB many times through and don't remember anything like this. People can talk what they want.

Kari

Hello Kari,

What particular portion are you referring to here? The thousand years? I have heard this many times, but I don't know the original intent of this.

Did this come from the Revelators? I suspect so, but not sure. I did a query with the electronic version on "one thousand years" and came up with 11 hits where this is in the book. Query "one thousand" and you will find many more hits that refer to other things. A thousand does seem significant in several ways however.

Mark

Answer 2–Richard Keeler, USA

On page 330, page 1086, and page 1109 (go to answer 3).

Answer 3–Pat Sonti, USA

We (UB Readers) hold in our hand information, revelation and a treasure that the prophets of olden times would have gladly given up their lives to have available. Yet, we (current generation of UB students) must surely be the laziest bunch ever! >>

THE ARENA

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**The Arena is a quarterly publication
dedicated to the promotion of goodwill
and understanding among readers of
~ The Urantia Book ~**

Editorial contributions are welcome. Subscription rates:

Australia/New Zealand – \$A10 per year. Other countries – \$A15 per year.

Please remit in Australian currency, cheques made payable to ANZURA.

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Hot Topics*continued from page 2*

Our Book has much information, carefully inserted here and there, to be found only by the devout and the diligent.

Here we go:

Pg 330: *It is not possible to formulate comprehensive and entirely consistent classifications of the personalities of the grand universe because all of the groups are not revealed. It would require numerous additional papers to cover the further revelation required to systematically classify all groups. Such conceptual expansion would hardly be desirable as it would deprive the thinking mortals of the next thousand years of that stimulus to creative speculation which these partially revealed concepts supply. It is best that man not have an overrevelation; it stifles imagination.*

Page 1086: *Mechanical inventions and the dissemination of knowledge are modifying civilization; certain economic adjustments and social changes are imperative if cultural disaster is to be avoided. This new and oncoming social order will not settle down complacently for a millennium. The human race must become reconciled to a procession of changes, adjustments, and readjustments. Mankind is on the march toward a new and unrevealed planetary destiny.*

Page 1109: *Because your world is generally ignorant of origins, even of physical origins, it has appeared to be wise from time to time to provide instruction in cosmology. And always has this made trouble for the future. The laws of revelation hamper us greatly by their proscription of the impartation of unearned or premature knowledge. Any cosmology presented as a part of revealed religion is destined to be outgrown in a very short time. Accordingly, future students of such a revelation are tempted to discard any element of genuine religious truth it may contain because they discover errors on the face of the associated cosmologies therein presented.*

Mankind should understand that we who participate in the revelation of truth are very rigorously limited by the instructions of our superiors. We are not at liberty to anticipate the scientific discoveries of a thousand years. Revelators must act in accordance with the instructions which form a part of the revelation mandate. We see no way of overcoming this difficulty, either now or at any future time. We full well know that, while the historic facts and religious truths of this series of revelatory presentations will stand on the records of the ages to come, within a few short years many of our statements regarding the physical sciences will stand in need of revision in consequence of additional scientific developments and new discoveries. These new developments we even now foresee, but we are forbidden to include such humanly undiscovered facts in the revelatory records. Let it be made clear that revelations are not necessarily inspired. The cosmology of these revelations is not inspired. It is limited by our permission for the co-ordination and sorting of present-day knowledge. While divine or spiritual insight is a gift, human wisdom must evolve.

My opinion: I do not expect a Magisterial Mission or any other spectacular revelatory event, other than the Second Coming of the Creator Son, to happen on our planet for the NEXT thousand years or so!

Take Care,

Pat Sonti ☐

ANZURA Annual Conference 2007 Report



By William Wentworth, Australia

The Melbourne Study Group hosted the conference this year, and held it at the Edmund Rice Centre at Lower Plenty.

Melbourne usually comes up with a good venue, and this one was no exception. On the banks of the Yarra, “Amberley”, the Edmund Rice Centre, was secluded without being isolated, in a peaceful bushland setting but close enough to services, the airport and taxis.

Under the theme “**The Book and I**”, Bob Reynolds and his team gave us a memorable series of presentations, allowing plenty of input from non-Melbournites, and as always with Melbourne, an innovative entertainment program.

Some of the highlights

Regina Williamson's “You've read the script; now do the play”, where Regina emphasised the importance of following one's own individual insights rather than allowing oneself to be too much influenced by the leadings of others. Her own determination not to be dissuaded from accepting the truth of the Revelation by well meaning friends inspired her to deeper study of the Urantia Book.

Bob Reynolds took us through Discovery, Reading and Understanding, Personal Growth, Sharing Growth with



Official group photo in the centre of the labyrinth, a feature of The Edmund Rice Centre

others and Attaining our Maximum Potential on Earth, and revisited an idea he picked up years ago differentiating our Circle of Interest from our Circle of Influence in order to be realistic in our expectations.

Vern Verass spoke eloquently on “My Favourite Places in the Urantia Book” addressing three questions he posed when first encountering the book: Who is Jesus?; Are Adam and Eve real?; and Is evolution true?

Bevan James spoke of the personal problems of his clients in the legal practice he operates, and the help he derives from the twelve points listed on p.1108.

...mortal personality to react to certain trying intellectual and testing social situations. Genuine spiritual faith (true moral consciousness) is revealed in that it:

1. *Causes ethics and morals to progress despite inherent and adverse animalistic tendencies.*
2. *Produces a sublime trust in the goodness of God even in the face of bitter disappointment and crushing defeat.*
3. *Generates profound courage and confidence despite natural adversity and physical calamity.*
4. *Exhibits inexplicable poise and sustaining tranquility notwithstanding baffling diseases and even acute physical suffering.*
5. *Maintains a mysterious poise and composure of personality in the face of maltreatment and the rankest injustice.*
6. *Maintains a divine trust in ultimate victory in spite of the cruelties of seemingly blind fate and the apparent utter indifference of natural forces to human welfare.*
7. *Persists in the unswerving belief in God despite all contrary demonstrations of logic and successfully withstands all other intellectual sophistries.*
8. *Continues to exhibit undaunted faith in the soul's survival regardless of the deceptive teachings of false science and the persuasive delusions of unsound philosophy.*
9. *Lives and triumphs irrespective of the crushing overload of the complex and partial civilizations of modern times.*
10. *Contributes to the continued survival of altruism in spite of human selfishness, social antagonisms, industrial greeds, and political maladjustments.*
11. *Steadfastly adheres to a sublime belief in universe unity and divine guidance regardless of the perplexing presence of evil and sin.*
12. *Goes right on worshipping God in spite of anything and everything. Dares to declare, "Even though he slay me, yet will I serve him."*



Dennis Dejong and Jay Peregrine on the balcony overlooking the Yarra River

The dreadful messes some people get themselves into are sometimes amenable to therapy, and Bevan sometimes can help by directing people to such therapies. Sometimes he needs his faith in God to preserve his own sanity.

Dennis Dejong gave us an account of efforts being made to discover the remains of the first Garden of Eden under the sea near Cyprus, and of Dalamatia under the Persian Gulf. For a full account visit sevenfoldbooks.com.

The program included generous time for people to reveal how they discovered the Urantia Book and to describe their initial reactions to it. Two of these tales may be singled out as being particularly interesting. Julian McGarry's journey from Jehovah's Witness activist to Urantia Book student was a stormy one, and Robyn Hromek told of a more tranquil passage. Julian's story is included.

The afternoon involved splitting into small groups to consider Bob's final point-maximising our potential on earth, and finished with all meeting on the labyrinth in the front of "Amberley". The labyrinth was a new experience for many of us, but has been used in the past as a stimulus to contemplation.

The evening entertainment was another Melbourne innovation. We remember that it was Melbourne who introduced the skit into the conference program in Sydney in 2001 with the unforgettable Wedding at Cana. This time there were skits by Melbourne, Sydney, and Canberra, followed by a gathering in fancy dress as a character from the book. There were a number of angels, various apostles, Adam and Eve, Michael, a solitary messenger, a Lanonandek and others, together with a very bibulous Life Carrier, a splendidly mysterious Melchizedek, and a gorgeous Divine Minister. Bevan James was a roving reporter with his usual wit and panache.



Attendees relaxing before the next presentation

Sunday began with Rita Schaad's worship service, followed by further personal stories of the discovery of the revelation.

Then Jay Peregrine, the executive director of Urantia Foundation, gave us an overview of the Foundation's origins and functions, taking questions from the floor, and explaining the Foundation's attitude to some of the tricky questions such as translations, and disagreements among readership groups. We were lucky to have Jay, as sometimes the ways of the northern hemisphere can seem a little mysterious to readers in Australia and New Zealand, and it is useful to have face to face meetings with someone as close to the centre as he is. Being personable and open, he was able to give and receive information with ease and empathy.

Merindi Swadling, recently elected vice-president of UAI, and back in Australia after a stint in Canada, also gave a brief talk about UAI and its functioning arms-the ISB, RC and Judicial Commission. As she pointed out, there will be more work for these bodies as the Strategic Plan begins to be realised.

The afternoon was taken up with a trip to Montsalvat, the artists colony near Eltham, which has an interesting history extending back to the beginning of the 20th century.

Together with all the friendships made and renewed, the program was a great success. Congratulations to our hosts, the Melbourne Study Group, and thanks for another memorable conference. □



Lunchtime, an opportunity for many animated discussions

THE ARENA

On a normal planet the arrival of the Material Son would ordinarily herald the approach of a great age of invention, material progress, and intellectual enlightenment.

...evolution — on Urantia or elsewhere — is always purposeful and never accidental.

Urantia is the first world in Satania where the six colored races sprang from the same human family.

Michael of Nebadon had bestowed himself six times after the similitude of six differing orders of his diverse creation of intelligent beings.

Then he prepared to descend upon Urantia in the likeness of mortal flesh, the lowest order of his intelligent will creatures...

...you need be concerned with but one thing, the unbroken communion between you and your Paradise Father...

...the world of your bestowal, even all the universe of your creation, will behold a new and more understandable revelation of your Father and my Father...

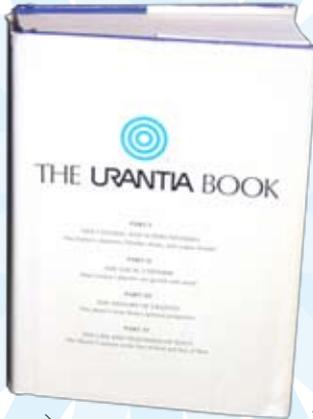
It was our intention to produce an early manifestation of will in the evolutionary life of Urantia and we succeeded.

The story of man's ascent from seaweed to the lordship of earthly creation is indeed a romance of biologic struggle and mind survival.

Adam endeavored to teach the races sex equality. The way Eve worked by the side of her husband made a profound impression upon all dwellers in the Garden.

...their place of abode is often called the Garden of Eden because it is characterized by the floral beauty and the botanic grandeur of Edentia, the constellation capital.

...but not so on Urantia. Though the planet was peopled by races physically fit, the tribes languished in the depths of savagery and moral stagnation.



My favourite places in *The Urantia Book*

By Verner Verass, Australia

My favourite places in the UB begin with the discovery of answers to three basic questions I had when I first began reading it as a 24 year old 34 years ago:

1. Who is Jesus?
2. Were Adam and Eve real people and was there ever a Garden of Eden?
3. Is evolution as I had been taught at school, true? Can science and religion be reconciled?

Who is Jesus?

The first and most important question was eloquently answered after reading less than a page of Paper 120. I experienced a truth recognition response.

From there unfolded the whole picture of our creator parent bestowing himself as a man of the realm to live a normal human life and I came to understand, 'if God was a man that man would be Jesus'.

In getting to know who Jesus was, a vital component was realizing who he was not. My Christian upbringing had told me he was God's only begotten son; now I was finding out he is not the Eternal Son the second person

of the Paradise Trinity. Paradise Trinity, here was something that needed further investigation.

How refreshing to know he arrived in the usual way (virgin birth not required) the fact of his incarnation a miracle in itself. Also of comfort, the knowledge he was not acting out a pre-ordained path, free will choice was always the controlling factor, even willingness to endure shocking injustice at the hands of frightened and ignorant men in power was an eloquent act of dignified love summed up in his final plea of redemption for mankind; "forgive them Father for they know not what they do".

I recognized the power of authority and the compelling the beauty of the perfectly chosen words portrayed as I read Immanuel's bestowal charge to Michael.

The Urantia Book (our Earth Book), I had figured as much. I entered upon this tome with paper 120 and a whole Pandora's box of new information presented itself for assessment, new terms cried out for qualification; Michael, Immanuel, Union of Days, Ancients of Days, Melchizedek, Gabriel, Nebadon, Salvington, Sonarington, Satania, Uversa, Eternal Son, Universal father, Infinite Spirit, Paradise Trinity, the Supreme, Adjuster, Lucifer, Caligastia, Adamic default. All this in less than 10 pages. Reference to the Adamic default in this paper was an apt pointer to my next question.

Were Adam and Eve real people and the Garden of Eden a factual place?

A mythical tale carried over unresolved into a scientific age of reason, so I thought. What was this story doing in this book of wisdom? Curiosity urged me onward. Could the story of creation be reconciled with evolution?

On turning to paper 74 titled, 'Adam and Eve', the opening paragraph prosaically set the scene of their arrival nearly 38 thousand years ago and confirmed their extra terrestrial origin. Much of what I was reading required corroboration within other parts of the book and I found myself flicking pages to get a fuller picture. As the Garden was mentioned in the opening paragraph, I turned to the preceding paper 'The garden of Eden' and there discovered a more comprehensive answer to my question. Adam and Eve were biologic uplifters.

With satisfaction I learnt that evolution is the norm and continues till mankind is ready to receive the benefit of biologic upstepping. This made sense.

Pieces of a fragmented and hazy past were falling into place. A great and far reaching tragedy had occurred and our present condition has been profoundly influenced by it. The Lucifer rebellion loomed large as another topic of investigation but reading on about the Garden of Eden gave me enough information to understand the story of Adam and Eve and their intended mission.

As the story unfolded, another mystery was unveiled, the chapter on 'The Tree of Life' showed how its fruit sustained Adam and Eve's immortality.

A picture was emerging of divine overcontrol at work in the progress of life on earth. With sadness I read of our thwarted destiny and conjectured what might have been.

Here I first became aware of the epochal nature of our past planetary administration and how Adam and Eve inaugurated a new era.

This paper also solved a biblical inconsistency, the land of Nod where it is said the sons of Adam went to get themselves wives. If Adam was the first man, where did these Nodites come from?

Other erroneous ideas carried over from my Christian upbringing were corrected on reading 'The Legend of Creation' p836. The story of creation of the world in six days and the story of the creation of Eve from a rib of Adam.

The story of a golden age and the fall of man is another hoary chestnut put to rest in this chapter.

Now I had established to a degree of satisfaction that both, evolution, natural selection and divine intervention, contributed to the development of life on earth.

As with the paper on Jesus a list of new terms had been thrown up for future consideration; Dalamatia, Daligastia, Life Carriers, Van, Amadon, midway creatures, fandors.



I had one more question to address before I could launch on the adventure of reading the book cover to cover, the key players to inform me of evolution, the Life Carriers, had already made a guest appearance in the story of Adam and Eve.

Is evolution, as I had been taught at school, true?

How did life originate? Did it a result from an accidental combination of molecules zapped by lightning?

With these questions in mind I turned to paper 65 'The Overcontrol of Evolution'

I had fun with this paper, my biology classes were fondly remembered as I learnt that the first amoeba is still with us and going strong.

How refreshingly assuring it was to know that evolution is the divine plan at work in time and space.

Just as the seed carries within itself the pattern of the full grown tree, the evolutionary panorama was the canvas of life where mankind was unfurled to emerge out of the slime and the ooze of primordial seas to flutter freely on the mountain top of survival. I'm still fascinated by the tale of ascending orders of creatures as they came to terms with the changing environment and forged patterns of behaviour as mind developed and experience resulted in improved survival choices. A curious feature of this story was mention of sudden changes in creature mutation. Like when a reptile became a bird and when a dinosaur became a mammal.

I had read enough of the UB by now to notice the priority placed on a hands-off approach when dealing with will creatures and appreciated this respect for free will. An emphasis in fact, which permeates the whole book.

Evolution is still in progress and we are told sudden progressive leaps are still possible. Mankind must forge its own destiny through intelligent fostering of its best potentials.

Paper 65 presented me with information of a revelatory nature right alongside the pageant of plant and animal life well familiar. What was news; we are a life-experiment world. Sequence of human development varies from the norm; Andonic race appeared before the coloured races and the Six coloured races appeared in one family. It was news to learn our world **is the only planet in our system of inhabited worlds where human will appeared before the coloured races. Early manifestation of will in evolutionary life, a success in modification of the Nebadon life design.**

As with the previous two papers, the list of new terms tugged at my growing curiosity to know more; Master Physical Controllers, Seven Master Spirits, Andon and Fonta, Sangik races and a doosie that would stretch my mind to the limits of comprehension when I finally started to read the Foreword, the Unqualified Absolute.

By now I was convinced I was onto something big, time to take it head-on, cover to cover. There I discovered many other favourite places for the words are a delight to contemplate and are filled with adventure and promise. Paper 140 on page 1568, ‘The Ordination of the Twelve’, another favourite, is one of many places that tells us we live in a friendly universe.

My current number one place is Paper 28, ‘Ministering Spirits of the Superuniverses’, page 306, with particular emphasis to the functioning of reflectivity in the Secondary Seconaphim and the Tertiary Seconaphim where I have learnt anew about; **The Significance of Origins, Memory of Mercy, The Import of Time, The Solemnity of Trust, The Sanctity of Service and The Secret of Greatness and the Soul of Goodness.**

If there is one favourite word, for me that word is **faith**.

If there is one favourite paragraph, for me it is about **faith**.

If there is one favourite person, for me it is Jesus, the man of **faith**.

Faith most willingly carries reason along as far as reason can go and then goes on with wisdom to the full philosophic limit; and then it dares to launch out upon the limitless and never-ending universe journey in the sole company of TRUTH. [1141:6]

Things that made me sit up and take notice

“I know whereof I speak”

P.32 : 1 Presented by a Divine Counselor, a member of a group of celestial personalities assigned by the Ancients of Days on Uversa, the headquarters of the seventh superuniverse, to supervise those portions of this forthcoming revelation which have to do with affairs beyond the borders of the local universe of Nebadon — I am commissioned to sponsor those papers portraying the nature and attributes of God because I represent the highest source of information available for such a purpose on any inhabited world. I have served as a Divine Counselor in all seven of the superuniverses and have long resided at the Paradise center of all things. Many times have I enjoyed the supreme pleasure of a sojourn in the immediate personal presence of the Universal Father. I portray the reality and truth of the Father's nature and attributes with unchallengeable authority; I know whereof I speak.

P.80 : 5 Presented by a Divine Counselor — The Eternal Son is a grand and glorious personality. Although it is beyond the powers of the mortal and material mind to grasp the actuality of the personality of such an infinite being, doubt not, he is a person. I know whereof I speak. Times almost without number I have stood in the divine presence of this Eternal Son and then journeyed forth in the universe to execute his gracious bidding.



P.1199 : 1 Presented by a Solitary Messenger — In a sense the Adjusters may be fostering a certain degree of planetary cross-fertilization in the domains of truth, beauty, and goodness. But they are seldom given two indwelling experiences on the same planet; there is no Adjuster now serving on Urantia who has been on this world previously. I know whereof I speak since we have their numbers and records in the archives of Uversa.

P.1408 : 6 Presented by the Urantia Midway Commission under the supervision of a Melchizedek revelatory Director — Between these two celestial visitations, one in his thirteenth year and the other at his baptism, there occurred nothing supernatural or superhuman in the life of this incarnated Creator Son. Notwithstanding this, the babe of Bethlehem, the lad, youth, and man of Nazareth, was in reality the incarnated Creator of a universe; but he never once used aught of this power, nor did he utilize the guidance of celestial personalities, aside from that of his guardian seraphim, in the living of his human life up to the day of his baptism by John. And we who thus testify know whereof we speak.

P.2020 : 2 Spoken by Jesus' Personalized Adjuster — Not one of you can do aught to assist your Creator-father in the return to life. As a mortal of the realm he has experienced mortal death; as the Sovereign of a universe he still lives. That which you observe is the mortal transit of Jesus of Nazareth from life in the flesh to life in the morontia. The spirit transit of this Jesus was completed at the time I separated myself from his personality and became your temporary director. Your Creator-father has elected to pass through the whole of the experience of his mortal creatures, from birth on the material worlds, on through natural death and the resurrection of the morontia, into the status of true spirit existence. A certain phase of this experience you are about to observe, but you may not participate in it. Those things which you ordinarily do for the creature, you may not do for the Creator. A Creator Son has within himself the power to bestow himself in the likeness of any of his created sons; he has within himself the power to lay down his observable life and to take it up again; and he has this power because of the direct command of the Paradise Father, and I know whereof I speak. □



How I found *The Urantia Book*

Presentation to ANZURA Annual Conference—
Melbourne 2007

By Julian McGarry

My very first contact with the Urantia Book was in 1993 when I walked into my local public library in Perth, Western Australia and, as was my custom, went straight to the “Religion” section. There staring me in the face was this enormous hard-covered blue volume with an intriguing name but no author. I quickly thumbed through it and, drawn by the fascinating chapter headings, immediately decided to borrow it. I ended up borrowing it three times in a row.

At this point I need to explain why I always looked for books on religion when I went to the library. My search for spiritual truth started when I was only a young boy of 10. My mother, who was raised a Catholic, was also a spiritual seeker and had looked into a variety of religions including Christian Spiritualism and Tibetan Buddhism. I used to read anything that she brought home and would often accompany her to meetings and would attend groups held at our house. In my teen years, we were door-knocked by a very kind man from the Jehovah’s Witnesses organization and at the age of 16 I began studying the Bible with him. I raised every conceivable objection to what he was teaching but over a period of two years I became convinced that these people had The Truth. Within a short time, I became a ‘pioneer’ which meant that I door-knocked for at least 100 hours per month. At the age of 21, I met my first wife who had been born and bred as a Jehovah’s Witness. We had three delightful children which eventually meant that I had to do less door-knocking and more paid work. I remained a devoted member of this organization for the next 8 years. It was then, however, that I began to find inconsistencies and incongruences in their dogma, which led me to approach the elders of my local church as well as write a comprehensive letter outlining my ‘discoveries’ to the Governing Body of the organization in New York. I was warned not to discuss my doubts with anyone, including my wife, which put an enormous strain on our marriage. My doubts quickly turned into strong convictions and the situation became very serious. I was given an ultimatum by the elders that I could not breathe a word of my beliefs to anyone otherwise I would be excommunicated from the organization. In my conscience, I could not agree to this and so in September 1983 I was formerly disfellowshipped from “The Truth”. My wife continued as a Jehovah’s Witness and under these difficult circumstances, it was impossible to maintain the viability of our relationship. We divorced several years later and I began to explore what other Christian churches had to say; my God was becoming bigger! However, I was soon to be disillusioned by the attitudes



to truth that I discovered....everyone had their own ‘ism’ and looked askance at anyone who was different.

In 1990, I went through a rough patch, a kind of ‘nervous breakdown’ during which I became very angry with God and fed up with the narrow-mindedness of organized religion. I put God and religion on the ‘backburner’ and decided to start having some fun. It was then that I met my second wife. I also decided to go back to university and study psychology and history. Despite all that had happened to me, however, I couldn’t get God out of my system.

It was just before I started uni that I discovered the Urantia Book in my local library. I went to university full-time for 6 years which left little time for religious pursuits. Nevertheless, I came in contact with spiritual people who were not Christian and this made me realize that God was much bigger than I ever imagined. I had almost forgotten about the UB when in November 2003, I ‘stumbled’ across a brand new copy in a book shop a few years after graduating. I bought the book and started reading vociferously. I then moved with my wife and our two children to Tasmania where I began my own private clinical psychology practice. I started a UB readers group with another couple living close by and made contact with ANZURA.

I have just attended my second UB Conference and have met some truly inspiring people. I can say with total conviction that *The Urantia Book* has in a truly breathtaking way, broadened and enlarged my concept of God. I feel so blessed that God has rewarded my ongoing quest for truth.

Julian McGarry – 27th October 2007 □



The attentive audience appreciating another quality presentation

Era before *The Urantia Book*

By Regina Williamson

- Why are there so many religions? All of them say the same thing – don't steal, don't kill and so on.
- Why does God allow horrible things to happen?
- Why is there evil in the world in the first place?
- If religions contradict themselves which one is the right one? How would we know?
- What is life all about?
- Does it have any meaning at all?
- If I step on an ant is it because it was planned that way?
- What is it that makes me act either way - good or bad?
- And the last question: is there life after death?

So many questions.

As a teenager, I was interested in astronomy, I was crazy about it. I often looked at the night sky and wondered what's really up there, and where it came from.

Before falling asleep I had all these "conversations" with myself almost every night and the answer was "I guess I'll never know."

After coming to Australia, I became interested in spiritual matters. I read everything I could get my hands on.

Because there is no proof, when it comes to believing or not believing, it's really a personal choice.

Okay, then I believe!

As I studied further into it I discovered so many contradictions!

Again, I was faced with the choice: to believe or not to believe.

That's life I guess.

Exploring beliefs of all sorts I noticed, that our behavior is influenced by our beliefs, so we should choose them carefully.

Questions, questions, questions of all sorts. Fair or fair; expectations – disappointments, relationships and whatever that brings.

Oh, life is tough!

Why are some humans sincere while others are not?

Why are we different?

We have all life to answer these questions.

The Urantia Book's "mysterious" appearance and not so mysterious change of life

Conversation with a friend

Vicki: What do you think God is?

Regina: It must be something like air. It's suppose to be everywhere. In a grain of sand, in a blade of grass and in all living creatures. I really don't know. Not an old guy I think. That's what organized religion says but others don't agree. I suppose I don't have any clear picture.

V: Okay, here is a book for you. You can keep it for a while.

R: Oh... what a size! (the big one in leather cover) How many pages?! Wow! I guess I won't be reading anything else for a while. Thanks!

I had the book for six months. When she took it back, I went to the shop and bought my own copy the same day.

That's how my UB adventure started. The rest is history and what a history! Am I grateful for the book? Grateful is not the word. It gives meaning to life, it makes a lot of sense, it is a life-saving book!

My habitual phrases were: "Life is so not fair!" and "The world is a horrible place."

My first impression after reading the book was that God really exists. Nature is not God, nature is only concerned with reproduction. Angels are real. All morality and ethics are part of the development of the human being, it is necessary. Striving to be God-like is to change yourself through self-conquest, self-understanding and self-mastery. Everybody's goal is self-mastery. UB gives a lot of information on a personal level. And what about cosmology? Isn't it great?

UB expands the mind so much that I will never feel lonely again. The world is friendly, a place, where the lessons come in a form of situations we have to deal with immediately. Life is never boring that way.

My life changed so much that sometimes I don't believe it. Family is the basic unit of civilization. A lot depends on the family. Being given that information my approach to problems at home changed drastically.

Trying it out, doing it is in. If anything is tried it has no chance to progress. Only with trying it until we do it, makes sense. Baby is encouraged to walk. Parents never give up. And the results are obvious.

We as a planet, had two misfortunes in the past: Rebellion and default. We are backward 2000 years and a little bit. Look at the last century. Can you imagine where would we be? I certainly cannot!

The family is a group of people with the same goal. Divorces are disasters for everybody. Parents and children.

Revelation is a short cut to achieving a goal. It saves thousands and thousands of years of trial and error. We UB are family.

A small plant of an English Box has a few leaves. Every year new leaves grow, which makes the bush bigger in all directions. On each year's growth its progress depends. That's how I see us as an organisation. I feel so privileged to be given the opportunity to read the book. At my work there is a definition of teamwork. Very often I stand there, look at it and read it.



Teamwork

Coming together is the beginning.

Working together is progress.

Staying together is success.

It impressed me so much the first time in relation to a family situation. In the situation of the UB family, it is equally impressive as well. Our organisation is so important. The revelation is here to help. The choice is of course ours.



UB Family

We came together we made the beginning.

We worked together and progressed together.

Now let's stay together and succeed.

Each generation has its share in it.

...Life is but a day's work—do it well. The act is ours; the consequences God's. [556]

I realized it in my life and it makes a huge difference. The second fragment that changed my life instantly was Jesus talking about the rich man taking care of his riches, neglecting his spiritual side and "that very night his soul was required....."

It fixed me on the spot! So I have to take care of everything at once? That's tough! But I have only today to cope with it. I certainly try it. Oops there is no such thing as "trying" in this case. There is only doing it - living a day. Hey, here is another thing - tomorrow. And it is not promised to anybody as Anthony Robbins said. It looks like he is right. Right now I am experiencing an emotional roller-coaster. My friend is very sick. Difficult consider one day, okay the next. Again and again and again. That is his situation. Guess what's mine? I have to live my life as

nothing happened. I have to function as normal. I tell you that's tough! But possible. Especially when you don't have any choice.

In conclusion: If anybody asked me what's the best thing in my life I would say The Urantia Book. It is the best friend you can have. A friend which teaches you how to include the whole world in your life - for it expands your mind so much that the whole world is a friendly place. The Urantia Book is only a book, life is life people say. It is only a book. But this book was given to an individual. I have it with me all the time. I can consult it anytime anyplace. It made me a better person, understanding, patient, tolerant - at least this is a degree of progress in comparison to who I used to be. To me, UB is about personal spiritual development done by you, on your own pace. the way you choose or just do. And of course we know it is the work of our Thought Adjuster. This book was given to our confused planet to show the way, to clarify matters and to help. □

New Zealand Corner

Relections on the Melbourne Conference

by Marion Steward

Once again I made my annual trek across the ditch (that's the Tasman Sea to us Kiwis) to spend a weekend communing with fellow readers, and, once again, it was a very worthwhile and spiritually enriching experience.

The venue was very well placed, and the glass wall in the chapel was amazing — so easy to worship the Father while gazing at a part of his wonderful creation. The theme, the *Book and I*, led to some deeply personal and moving stories of the journeys people have made on their search for spiritual truth. As I write this, more than one month later, three things in particular remain very vivid in my memory :

- the amazing display of paintings of Michael with children that Robert showed us in his presentation on the FreeSchools - while the product of many artists' imaginations, they were all truly beautiful and I think accurately captured the love and care felt by Michael towards all his children. Not so long ago here in New Zealand, we had the sad spectacle of fervent Christians marching in the streets protesting against a Bill in Parliament that proposed to make physical punishment of children by their parents illegal. I wonder what the effect might have been if they could have seen these paintings and thought about how Jesus treated children in his time here on Earth.
- the inspiring story shared by Julian about his time with the Jehovah's Witnesses, and what trials he had to undergo in his unflinching search for the truth. That was a very special experience for us all.



- walking the labyrinth — this was very interesting, and gave a whole new dimension to the idea of a walking meditation — ever coming to Crossroads, and coming nearer to God at the centre then moving out again. I loved the deep symbolism of it all, so reflective of life's journey for us all.

Prison Placement Programme Bears Fruit

Several years ago, one of our readers undertook to place a Urantia Book in all the prisons in New Zealand, as part of the Foundation Prison Placement Program. In one prison in particular, this attracted the interest of several inmates, one of whom has bought at least 10 books to share with his fellow prisoners and, since his release, with family and friends. Recently, one of these new readers, recently released, came to visit me and to buy several books. I was not expecting him — he knocked on the door one Saturday morning and said "I've been reading your book". I had to tell him it wasn't my book but I opened the door straight away — UB readers are always welcome! He shared his story with me — he had been a drug dealer for over 40 years, and finding the Urantia Book had finally persuaded him to try and change his life. He was very aware that it was not going to be easy - changing such a long life habit was going to take huge commitment, with no guarantee of success. He said that he prayed often, and was reasonably confident that he could do it. It was a very interesting encounter, and hopefully he will remain on his new path. □



Put a big circle around



Glimpses of our next ACT conference venue



Personality



Ascending Mortal



Thought Adjuster

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If you would like to be listed as a contact person (), advise about your study Group or if your details have changed—please contact the editor [see page 2].*

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Thought Gem for November
*Success may generate
courage and promote
confidence, but wisdom
comes only from experiences
of adjustment to the results
of one's failures.*

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