



William Wentworth

From the President

With 2010 now well underway, I reflect how 2009 was dominated by ANZURA's effort at The Parliament of World Religions. The Sydney conference in September offered time and space for some rehearsing and positive criticism of our proposed presentations, and helped lay the groundwork for the organisational effort required.

As usual, Trevor and Kathleen Swadling played a major role, with Kathleen standing in for her daughter, Merindi, who had her first baby just as the parliament was finishing. Vern Verass put his design skills to work on the book booth and brochures made available during the parliament.

A very welcome opportunity was provided by Steve Shanahan, a well known Melbourne reader, who hosted an evening at his house in Melbourne the day before the parliament opened. Overseas visitors could thus be greeted and welcomed by ANZURA, while being fed a sumptuous meal by Steve. There were visitors from USA, Canada, Finland, Germany and possibly others, as well as Australian visitors from interstate.

Many of those present volunteered to help man the book booth at the parliament, through which a couple of hundred books were distributed to interested members of the public and parliament attendees. Some of them seemed to be experienced and accomplished personal workers, many of whom had attended previous parliaments. There was a great sense of camaraderie among those workers at the book booth, and the booth itself

became a focal point for Urantia Book readers to meet one another and exchange experiences.

The workshop presentation of *The Urantia Book* was given by Kathleen Swadling, Nigel Nunn and myself, to a small audience of about forty or fifty people, of whom perhaps half were new to the book. The presentation seemed well received, Nigel being in particularly good form.

At the conclusion of the parliament, some of the Americans invited us to their flat for an evening meal and farewell gathering.

I think ANZURA can be proud of the way *The Urantia Book* presence at the parliament was handled. A lot of thought and work went into it, and the result was a thoroughly well organised effort which constituted productive outreach and great fun to be part of.

As for other matters, 2010 looks to being a quieter year than 2009. Julian McGarry is well advanced with planning for ANZURA's annual conference in Hobart. Further information appears in this issue. ■

In this issue...

News

<i>President's Report</i>	1
<i>Welcome Rose Marie Belarski</i>	2
<i>National Study Day</i>	2
<i>NZ Corner</i>	2

Contributions

<i>ANZURA Conference 2010 – Invitation to Tasmania</i>	3
<i>Parliament of the World's Religions – Report of presentation</i> ...	5
<i>Parliament of the World's Religions – Conference photos</i>	14
<i>Study Groups in Australia & New Zealand</i>	14

Welcome Rose Marie Belarski



Bernie and Merindi Belarski are pleased to announce the arrival of their baby daughter Rose Marie. She arrived with us on 11th December 2009, weighing 2.9kgs and measuring 48.5cm in length. She is an adorable little girl and growing quickly as the weeks go by. Thank you to all our friends who have expressed their joy and blessings following her birth.

Merindi Belarski ■

~ National Study Day ~ 22–23 May 2010

Paper 5

God's Relation to the Individual

ANZURA's National Study Day is set for the weekend of May 22-23. The theme of this years conference leads us to delve deep into the mystery of finding God within.

Man does not have to go farther than his own inner experience of the soul's contemplation of this spiritual-reality presence to find God and attempt communion with him. [p.62]

The divine presence cannot, however, be discovered anywhere in nature or even in the lives of God-knowing mortals so fully and so certainly as in your attempted communion with the indwelling Mystery Monitor, the Paradise Thought Adjuster. What a mistake to dream of God far off in the skies when the spirit of the Universal Father lives within your own mind! [p.64:6]

As we ponder God's relation to us as individuals we hopefully see the importance in evaluating our reactions and responses towards our fellow men. Isn't the 'getting along' of siblings—understanding each other in our diversity—the most satisfying experience of a parent. When we seek to do the Will of the Father in Heaven we find that the needs in our own community supply enough opportunities for us to extend that divine outreach and embrace we have come to experience in our hearts and mind—and in so doing are of service in the Fathers kingdom.

An invitation to the worldwide readership is once more extended. Inspiring to know that many readers across the globe are setting aside this day to join with others in study and reflection. We hope you all have the chance to get together with fellow readers to share this remarkable paper.

The proof of fraternity with the divine Adjuster consists wholly in the nature and extent of the fruits of the spirit which are yielded in the life experience of the individual believer. "By their fruits you shall know them." [p.65] ■

New Zealand Corner

by Neville Twist

The Electronic Age & The Urantia Book

Today the electronic/digital age has taken us to 2G, 3G & XT networks, I-Phones (with built-in GPS, cameras, sound recorders, radio tuners etc), satellite phones, and of course the internet with emails, skype, shopping, banking, music & movie downloads, and search engines for just about anything imaginable. We can even zoom into almost any square meter on this planet from space! News spreads around the world in milliseconds. GPS tells us where we are and how to get to the next place. It can even tell us who is looking for love and where they are. The all in one 'Tablet' is about to be launched.

Extraordinary stuff when we think about it, and to think most this has evolved over the last couple of decades. All over the world, today's young people are so interconnected and dependant on these electronic devises that to be without them, gives them a feeling of total isolation, almost hopelessness. Just try removing one from a teenager as a disciplinary measure! I wonder what the future has in-store over the next couple of decades. It is both exciting and scary at the same time.

So what's this got to do with *The Urantia Book*? It's a question I have often posed to myself. Our celestial friends and administrators would have undoubtedly known the electronic age would come to Urantia. They'd have known this long before making contact to present the Urantia papers. Maybe that is why for the first time in all Nebadon, they decided to present the fifth epochal revelation to our planet in written text form. But is there a more underlying reason for them doing so?

I sometimes speculate that this interconnectivity of this new age might bring about some kind of spiritual renaissance. If mere mortal man can invent such amazingly sophisticated telecommunication devises, is it possible that people may begin to think about their interconnectivity with the universe? Is it possible that a hand held man made devise that can interconnect us with virtually anything on earth, record and track our every movement, might somehow get people thinking about the Creator of everything?

We know from reading *The Urantia Book*, that our Thought Adjusters record every single thought, action, motivation and aspiration of our entire lives. And that the Ancients of Days use this recording to help assess whether we are granted survivor status or not. I know this is a bit left-field thinking in this present day, but who knows what the future holds for our planet Urantia.

Imagine if a gospel message could be presented to young people formulated around the idea of our Thought Adjusters being the most awe inspiring communicating device in the whole universe. One that interconnects us with Michael of Nebadon, and the Universal Father himself! Jesus promised one day to return to our planet, but when and how he will do this, is unrevealed. Will electronics and digital age be part of this? I suspect so.

Neville Twist ■



I invite you to Tasmania

by Julian McGarry



You are cordially invited to an exciting and sacred event! This year's ANZURA conference will explore the themes of Worship — “the highest privilege and the first duty of all created intelligences”, and Service — “the goal of time and the destination of space”, and how together they can lead us to ultimate self-realization. *The Urantia Book* has much to say about these dual major components of God's will. They are inter-related and interdependent and they hold the key to our personal salvation and the future transformation of our world.

We will discover that worship supplies us with the energy and the motivating power that enables us to produce a service ministry to God and man “which is filled with mercy and motivated by love”. We will explore how worship and service become progressively more critical aspects of the supernal adventure that lies before us.

Service—more service, increased service, difficult service, adventurous service, and at last divine and perfect service—is the goal of time and the destination of space. P316:4

Worship and service are the complementary components of our life in the spirit. They were the “sum and substance” of Christ Michael's remarkable life on Urantia [P.1769:4]. They will continue to be the foundation of our ascension career at every stage of the journey; from the mansion worlds of Jerusem, to the magnificent Melchizedek Universities of Salvington, to the higher spirit levels of Uversa, and ultimately to the perfect worlds of Havona, the glory of Paradise and on into eternity. Regardless of our station in life, our temporal work, our innate potentials, or our state of health, we can offer to our Father the highest quality of worship and service. This is the greatest gift that we can possibly give to him. Let us come together as brothers and sisters in the same universal family and learn how we can live our lives at a level that we never dreamt was possible!

Venue 15 Home Ave, Blackmans Bay, Tasmania



Annual National Conference Hobart 1–4 October 2010

* *Worshiping and Serving our Father* *

With pleasure and anticipation we look forward to the major event in ANZURA's calendar year – *The Urantia Book* Reader's conference. We hope that again many of you can make the exciting overseas trip to picturesque Blackmans Bay, South of Hobart to join others to discern and find out more about: WORSHIP – Attaining the highest levels of self-realization.

If anyone has not yet received a brochure, please contact the office and we will send one your way!

Worship is the highest privilege and the first duty of all created intelligences. P303:5 ■



Derwent Bridge, gateway to Hobart with Mt Wellington shrouded in clouds, rising above the city in the background.

We are blessed with a perfect venue for discussing our conference theme for this year. For the duration of the whole conference, we have exclusive use of the Maryknoll House of Prayer Retreat and Conference Centre, which lies only a short walk from the beautiful waters of Blackmans Bay, approximately 15 mins south of Hobart. Run by the Tasmanian Presentation Sisters since 1979, the Centre offers a chapel for worship, a large conference room, a kitchen, dining room, and several smaller rooms that could be used for study group discussions. Accommodation is all on-site and consists of three double rooms, five twin rooms, and twelve single rooms; in addition there are three self-contained hermitages each suitable for a couple or small family. Beds all have electric blankets and each bedroom has an electric heater. Bed linen and towels are supplied.

To material, evolutionary, finite creatures, a life predicated on the living of the Father's will leads directly to the attainment of spirit supremacy in the personality arena and brings such creatures one step nearer the comprehension of the Father-Infinite. Such a Father life is one predicated on truth, sensitive to beauty, and dominated by goodness. Such a God-knowing person is inwardly illuminated by worship and outwardly devoted to the wholehearted service of the universal brotherhood of all personalities, a service ministry which is filled with mercy and motivated by love, while all these life qualities are unified in the evolving personality on ever-ascending levels of cosmic wisdom, self-realization, God-finding, and Father worship. P1175:1



The conference room.

The view to Blackman's Bay.

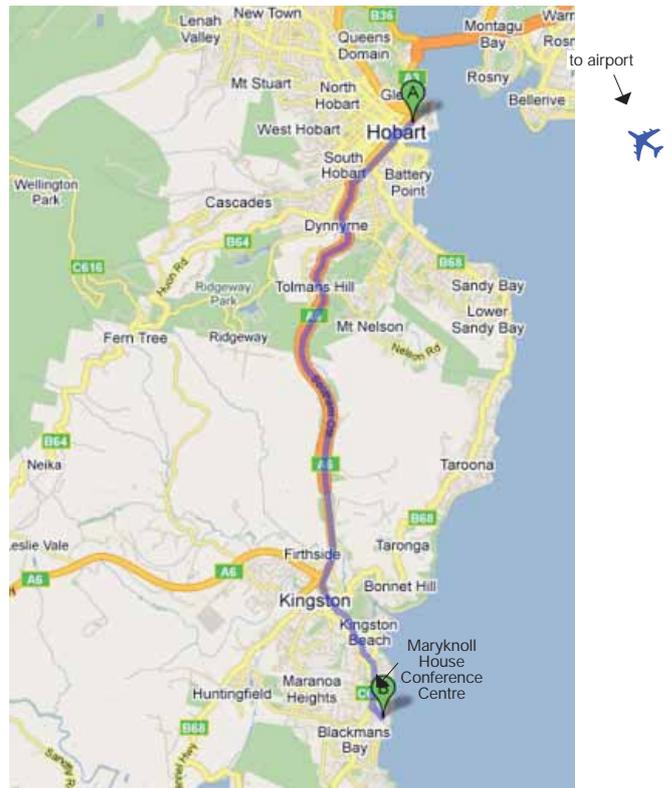
Catering The Centre provides lunch and dinner every day as well as self-serve breakfast. In addition, tea, coffee and other refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Excursion There are two possibilities for the Sunday afternoon excursion depending on the weather, either a scenic tour of Hobart including afternoon tea or a ferry cruise on the Derwent. Please indicate your preference by ticking the box on the registration form.

Cost — Full conference \$300 — includes 3 nights accommodation plus all meals. Alcoholic beverages will be available but you will be asked to contribute to the cost if you wish to partake.

Daily Rate \$90 — includes both lunch and dinner.

Daily Rate \$50 — includes only lunch



Location map showing route from Hobart

Julian McGarry ■

ANZURA's presentation of *The Urantia Book* at the Parliament of the World's Religions

December 3–9, Melbourne, Australia 2009

What's love got to do with it

by Kathleen Swadling, William Wentworth, Nigel Nunn.

Part 1: Kathleen Swadling (Sydney)

Good afternoon and thanks for coming along to our workshop: “**The Urantia Papers—What’s Love got to do it?**” The theme for this Parliament of the World’s Religions is “*Make a World of Difference: Hearing Each Other, Healing the Earth.*” No doubt most of us attending this event do so because we care, because we *desire* to make a difference. And unless we really *desire* to make a difference, unless we *desire* to help, to hear and to heal, then we won’t.

But where does this desire come from? How does one move beyond old attitudes and narrow motivations? How do we get to that place where we become truly interested in one another? And how does this interest become friendship and ripen into *love*? Well if we can answer this, we’ve found the key; for once we love someone, the desire wells up to help, to hear and to heal.

But where does this desire to *love* one another come from? It appears naturally enough among family and friends; it builds between neighbours who work together; and it begins between strangers once trust is won. And why is Love so powerful and so efficient at resolving knots in our relationships? To understand this we need to know more about what and who we are.

The Urantia Papers offer new answers to these age old questions. As well as providing a larger frame in which to think—one that may satisfy scientists, philosophers and religionists alike—the Urantia Papers reveal a fresh perspective on Personality. They then trace for us the rise and role of Love, from the eternal core of the Absolute directly into the human heart.

This afternoon we’d like to share with you a little bit about *The Urantia Book*—a book that many people from every walk of life and from every cultural and religious background are finding truly inspiring. They are finding the teachings have profoundly impressed and changed their lives, stimulating them to new levels of spiritual growth and enlightened living. I’ll introduce our main speakers to you in just a few moments, but first a very brief overview of this 2,097 page book.

The Urantia Book was first published in 1955 in the United States by the Urantia Foundation. The first two questions people usually ask is who wrote this book and what does *Urantia* mean?



The Urantia Book booth at the Parliament of the World's Religions Conference

To be receptive to the teachings of this book, it’s advisable to be open minded to the assumption that the universe is teeming with highly intelligent life and that it’s possible that from time to time some of these super mortal personalities find ways of revealing information to us that may assist us in our spiritual journey. This is what we believe happened with *The Urantia Book*.

The story of how the book came about over several decades in the early part of the 20th century is intriguing but is not the subject of today’s workshop. Suffice to say there are no human authors of this book. It is a compilation of information given to us by a variety of universe personalities. They tell us that much of the time they’ve drawn from the highest levels of human philosophical thought. We’re told that Urantia is the name they have given to our world—to our planet. We are told about the origin, history and destiny of our world and of the human race.

They’ve given us first hand accounts of familiar stories, stories that have survived in fragmented legendary forms, such as Adam and Eve, the downfall of Lucifer, the role of Melchizedek who was around in the times of Abraham, and the life and teachings of Jesus. Historical information is presented to us against a backdrop of an amazingly broadened view of the universe, of spiritual reality, and of the nature and character of God.

Close on a million books are now in circulation since its beginnings in the 1950’s. It has been translated and published into 11 of the world’s major languages with around 14 translations into other languages in progress. The entire text is on the internet and an audio version is available on MP3 and can be downloaded from the internet for free for anyone to hear.

The authors don’t describe or advocate a new religion, rather they build on the religious heritage of the past and present, encouraging a personal and living religion

based on service to one's fellows. The central message is that all human beings are one family, the sons and daughters of a loving God whose attitude toward his creation is that of a Universal Father. He's given us a fragment of himself to indwell us and if we so choose to follow the leadings of that indwelling spirit then there's an amazing voyage of eternal discovery ahead of us.

Here are a couple of quotes from the book:

There is in the mind of God a plan which embraces every creature of all his vast domains, and this plan is an eternal purpose of boundless opportunity, unlimited progress, and endless life. And the infinite treasures of such a matchless career are yours for the striving! The goal of eternity is ahead! The adventure of divinity attainment lies before you!

[p. 365, par. 3]

There is a great and glorious purpose in the march of the universes through space. All of your mortal struggling is not in vain. We are all part of an immense plan, a gigantic enterprise, and it is the vastness of the undertaking that renders it impossible to see very much of it at any one time and during any one life. We are all a part of an eternal project which the Gods are supervising and outworking. The whole marvelous and universal mechanism moves on majestically through space to the music of the meter of the infinite thought and the eternal purpose of the First Great Source and Center. [p. 364, par. 3]

I'd like to introduce you now to our main speakers William Wentworth from Towamba on south coast of NSW, and then Nigel Nunn from Canberra. William and Nigel are long time students of the book and have some interesting insights to share with you.

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Part 2: William Wentworth (Towamba)

The Urantia Book is not in itself a religion. Rather, it focuses on the spiritual impulse which gives rise to religions. While there is some truth contained in all religions, it is to the common root of all religions that the book directs attention. It seeks to strip away the fear of God, the dread of sin and transgression, and replace it with faith in the friendly nature of God, who is wholly benevolent and fatherly in his attitude to his creatures. He understands his creatures, knows their limitations, and loves them, and wants them to know him as an inspiration rather than as something to be feared.

Figure 1 illustrates a generalised view of the structure of a religion. Underlying it is spiritual experience—often the experience of a great man such as Gautama Siddhartha or Mohammed—but there is no conceptual language to express this experience. Man cannot describe his direct experience with God. It remains a mar-

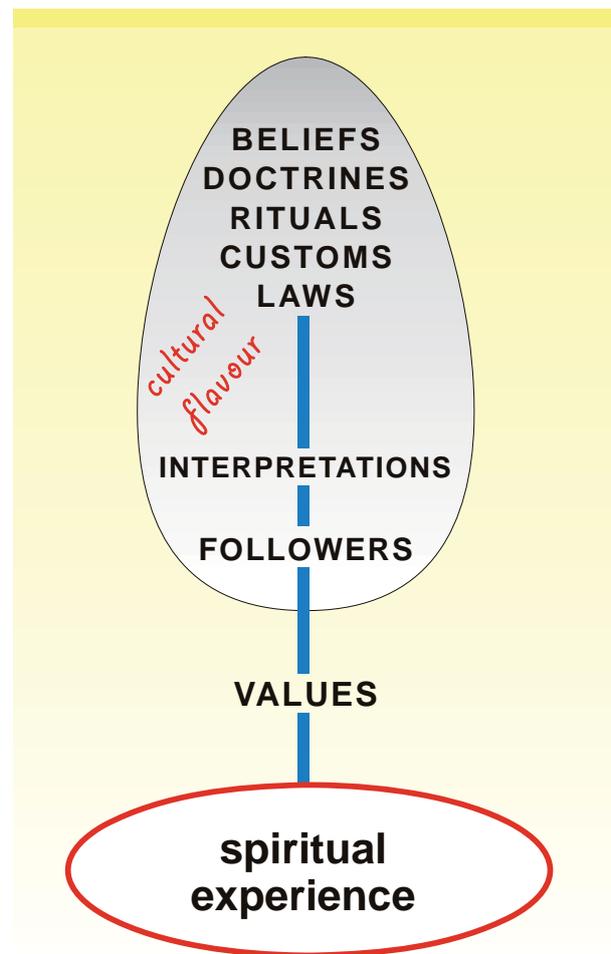


figure 1: a generalized view

vellous mystery. But it does give rise to values which are remarkably similar, which the book generalises as Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

At this point the followers of the great man—the source of the motivating spiritual experience—begin to try to make sense of that experience, and their interpretations are conditioned by their cultural traditions. These interpretations crystallise in time into the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, customs and laws which reflect the flavour of the cultural civilisation the interpreters inhabit. And so spiritual experience and values which are initially very similar become very different institutional religions, illustrated in Figure 2.

The Urantia Book proclaims that the things portrayed inside those egg shaped ovals are but the external trappings of religion. The essence of religion lies in the spiritual experience underlying that structure. And while some who devote themselves to the egg find their way to true spiritual experience, many do not, but remain stranded in a maze of dogma which is no substitute for true religion.

The book contends that religions and civilisations will conflict with one another until men make it their business to strive for spiritual experience—personal experience of God. It points out that God yearns for man to know him, and when man responds to that yearning he

makes God the inspiration of his daily life. Even notions of sacredness and holiness have been exaggerated to the point where they undermine God's friendliness. *The Urantia Book* suggests that it is natural and normal for man to bring God into his everyday life as a friend and inspiration, to share his inner life.

The book reiterates again and again that God yearns to conserve all men, and that his attitude is friendly and fatherly. Men can experience sonship with God by including him in their inner life. This personal spiritual experience is what constitutes true religion.

In order to help us understand the nature of spiritual experience, *The Urantia Book* uses many concepts, and some of the most significant are **Personality, Thought Adjuster and Soul**. Thought Adjuster is something new, but Personality and Soul are familiar. The book does use those terms in quite unusual ways, however.

Personality the book portrays as something far grander and more mysterious than our common usage. Along with matter, mind and spirit, personality is one of the fundamental realities of the universe. It does not evolve. It is a direct bestowal by deity. Evolution resulted in a body/mind system capable of harbouring personality, more or less as our scientists have discovered. But God bestows personality on that evolved system, which becomes a human person as a result of that bestowal. From the perspective of *The Urantia Book*, a human being is an animal with personality.

The astonishing quality of personality is that it exhibits some freedom from antecedent causation. As far as we know, it is the only reality in existence with this characteristic. Everything else, matter, mind and spirit, is governed and bound by that chain of causation which originates with God and operates unfailingly throughout reality as cause and effect. But personality, within its sphere of operation, is not so bound. Within a human

mind, personality has freedom of moral choice, and that freedom is absolute. God wants to salvage all his creatures—**but only if they want to be saved**. God does not force us to believe in him, or to accept salvation. As freewill personalities we can choose. It is entirely up to us. God bestows personality, and promptly relinquishes control of it. He retains control of everything else, either directly or through agencies which he originates. He originates personality, but allows it to be free.

In practice, we experience this freedom of will as those moral choices which life throws up at us. We can choose to harbour resentment, or let bygones be bygones; we can choose to seek revenge or to forgive; we can choose to excuse or to retaliate; we can choose to seek God or ignore him. In these moral choices we are free—free to go it alone, or take advice; to love or hate; to learn or ignore—as we choose.

The Thought Adjuster is a new concept introduced by *The Urantia Book* to describe the influence of God within us. And the book pulls no punches here. This influence is more than just an influence. The thought adjuster is an actual portion—a bit, a piece, a chunk—the book uses the term fragment—of absolute eternal deity, indwelling our mind. I repeat; this is not a metaphor for the influence of God, or for an attenuation of God, or for a disembodied presence of God. This is a piece of the real thing, a chip off the old block, an actual fragment of deity. And it sits in our mind as the indwelling adjuster. It indwells us as a guiding light, to point us Godward, but it is subservient to our will. When God relinquishes control of freewill personality, that means free, and even the fragment of eternal deity indwelling our minds cannot coerce us.

How it works we do not know—it is a mystery. But somehow, without forcing us against our will, it guides us towards the light of life, towards the way of living

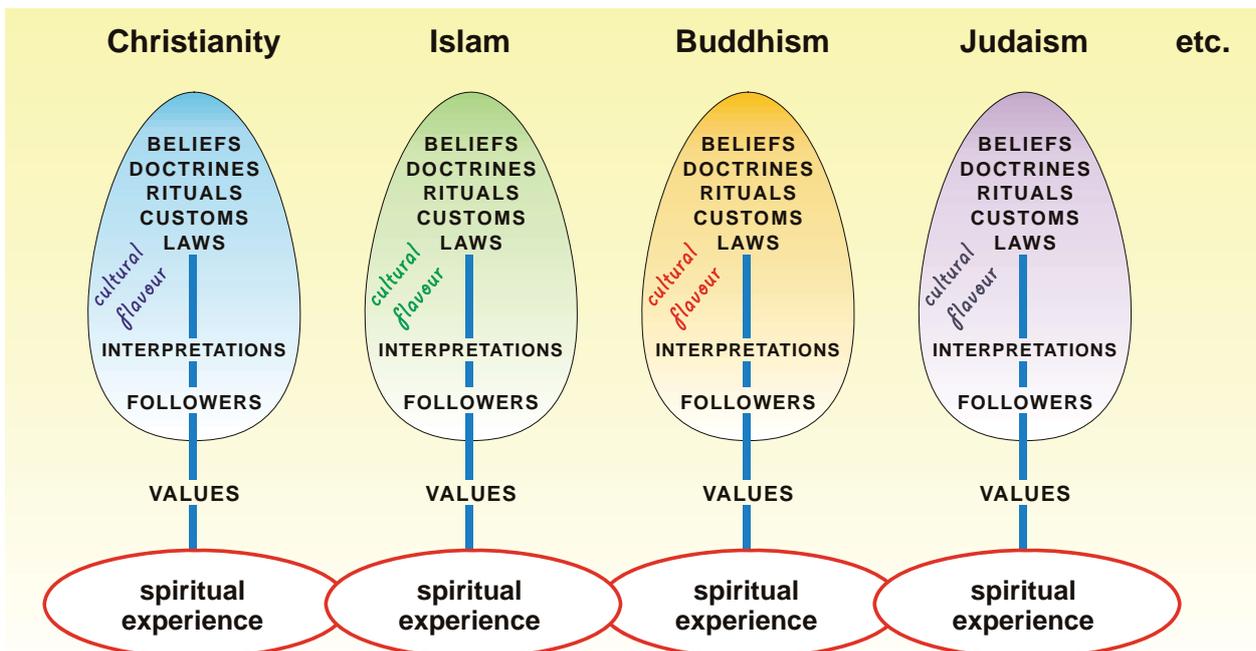


figure 2: from spiritual experience to institutionalised "religions"

which leads us Godward. Because God's plan is so far beyond our comprehension, we have a long period of learning before we can consciously co-operate with it. But the adjuster is there, never resting, working to guide us toward God's way. And it is not interested in making us too comfortable. Its task is to prepare us for our future life, after our earthly life is finished, and that requires some strenuous learning experiences and energetic choices—things a bed of roses is unlikely to provide.

There really is no logical problem with freewill following God's will. Our freewill is not being subverted by God's will. Once we realise that God does whatever is done in the best way there is to do it, there is no problem in aligning our will with God's. Naturally, we want to do whatever we do in the best possible way too. And it is our indwelling adjuster who somehow or other makes known to us what the best way of doing things is. This does sometimes lead to conflict between what our indwelling adjuster is urging us to do, and what our cultural loyalty requires of us. Our freewill has to referee such conflicts, and they can be confusing. Sometimes we get it right, and sometimes we blunder, but our adjuster never gives up. It keeps presenting us with opportunities to choose—choosing the best way to proceed, or an inferior way—God's way or some other way.

The Soul is a concept familiar to many religions, but *The Urantia Book* uses it in a slightly different way. The soul is that part of us which survives bodily death, but *The Urantia Book* conceives of the soul as an evolving reality, brought into being and growing according to our moral choices.

Humans are endowed with freewill personalities capable of moral choice, and indwelling adjusters are continuously offering opportunities to exercise such choice for or against God's will. Daily life, in its interactions with others in family, work, leisure, play and so on offers myriad incidents where choice must be exercised. In some manner beyond our comprehension, our indwelling adjuster manages to cast such choices into the form of **in accord with God's will**—the best solution—or **not in accord with God's will**. Choices in accord with God's will contribute to soul growth. Whenever a choice is made which is in accord with God's will, a little bit is added to our soul, and as habits build up which reiterate these choices, our soul becomes a powerful presence in our selfhood.

The Urantia Book thus regards the soul as the evolutionary product of the interaction between two realities at work within us, namely freewill personality and the indwelling adjuster. Though we are not conscious of our soul, or its growth, we nevertheless experience some indication of those spiritual experiences which bring about its growth, but such indications are purely personal and difficult to generalise. However, many people find that their attempts to do the will of God lead them to experience increased appreciation for their fellow men, and greater desire to serve them. Someone once suggested that love is the business of personalities. That

love is greatly enhanced by the desire to do the will of God.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that *The Urantia Book* fills a great gap in our religious lives in that it provides a concept vocabulary which has been lacking until now. So much of our spiritual striving is unconscious that we have no agreed set of concepts with which to think about our experience. We have not had any reference frame spanning the gaps between the various religious philosophies which allows us to understand what might be happening to us, or which allows us to compare notes with others whose experience might be comparable. Up until now, the mystery of our inner life has been so profound that we have readily become confused and disheartened when confronted by scientific hubris, materialistic worldly wisdom or dogmatic certitude. *The Urantia Book* suggests a conceptual vocabulary which allows intellectual enquiry consistent with the modern viewpoint and helps us to make sense of religious striving.

As you can see, I think it's a great book!

* * *

Part 3: Nigel Nunn (Canberra)

Hi, my name is Nigel Nunn. My background is mathematics and astrophysics. I study how stars collapse and the shape of space & time. So what am I doing at a parliament of religions, talking about Love?

Well, when I was about 16, I suffered one of those moments of "*peace that passes all understanding*". For a minute or two, my anxieties and fears, my desires and illusions all just melted away. This peace, together with feelings of such clarity and love, were so intense (and so interesting!) that those usual things that move teenagers, like sex, drugs and rock & roll, began to seem pale in comparison. As we know, idealistic teenagers are excited by the idea of a "**Quest**", and I now had mine: to discover what it is about ourselves that can experience such intensity of peace, such depth of love.

I survived a final year of school, then soon found myself in that extraordinary "*Adyar Bookshop*" in Sydney, run by the Theosophical society. Over the next 8 or 9 months, I read my way through much of their stock of theological and philosophical works, sacred texts and mystical manuscripts.

I became aware of surrendering and submitting to God, of being "slain by the spirit" and "born again", of chakras and yogas, of etheric bodies and astral travel, of that well-mapped path through my squirming addictions, past the death of my delusions, into the nearness of Nirvana. And of taking holidays, blissed out in the right hemisphere of our brain.

But what did it all mean? When personal, one-on-one contact with God is so available, so beautiful, so free, why all these systems of faith, these rituals and doctrines? How and why did they evolve? What on earth is going on? I felt it was time to take a different tack.

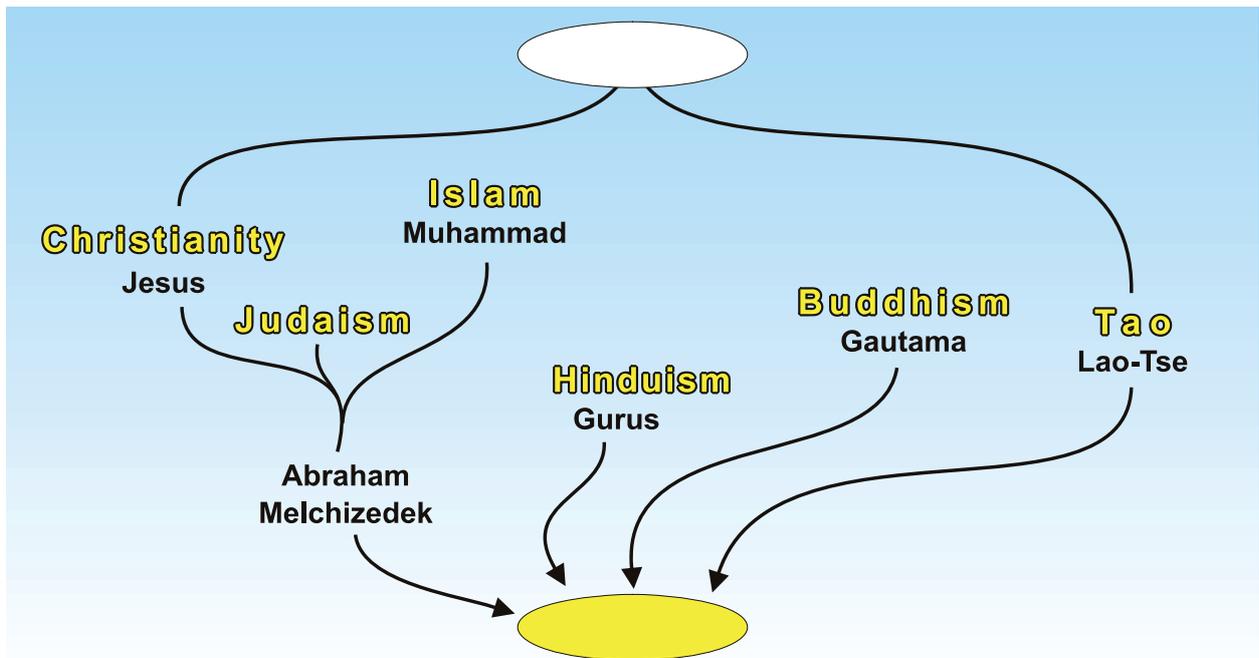


figure 3: from spiritual experience to institutionalised “religions”

I approached the lady behind the counter and thanked her for allowing me to read all her books, then I asked: “Have you got something... bigger, something *comprehensive*, something that brings together and explains all these experiences and beliefs?”

“Well,” she said, reaching under the counter and pulling out *The Urantia Book*, “There is *this*.”

* * *

That was 1979, 30 years ago. Over those 30 years, I have continued to be intrigued by these papers. And I have evolved some ideas and images that for me, help answer those questions of what and who and why we are. But most especially, some ideas have been ripening on the origin, the nature and the purpose of **Love**—what is this thing we call love, and what role does love play in the universe?

This afternoon, I would like to try and share with you a glimpse of the insights I have found within these extraordinary & unexpected papers.

But first, let’s begin with the reason we are all here in Melbourne, and consider this Parliament’s theme:

“Making a difference,
hearing each other,
healing the earth.”

Anyone who has done time working as a peace-maker or mediator will notice some challenges implied by this theme. For example, when two or more of us try to work together, to “make a difference”, what if we are not on the same page? What if, after listening, hearing and understanding each other, we discover that our aspirations diverge? That our **plans for Peace** actually conflict?

We can all point to heroic attempts to foster “peace

and understanding...” that have failed. This makes one wonder: why do so many such “**well-laid plans**” unravel? Why (so often) do we see such small return from such big investment of good intentions? Has there been something missing in previous attempts to “make a difference”, to hear each other, to repair the damage we cause?

Has there been something missing? A few fundamental things come to mind: we have never had a shared, planet-wide understanding of who and what we really are; we have never had a shared, planet-wide understanding of what this world is for; and there has been an obvious shortage of **Love**, that essential **desire to do good to each other**.

These **Urantia Papers** offer some ideas about all these things, but first, let’s consider what we—this parliament—represent, this attempted interaction of our separated faiths. It was **religious insight**, through revelation or through prophets, that fostered these **systems-of-faith** (these **separated** systems of faith) that now require our **inter-faith** effort. As we know, each of these systems-of-faith have their more adventurous members, those who go deep, to the roots, to the very heart of their tradition. Should we be surprised if they each discover one God, one Source of Truth, one Center of Love? Yet when they return from their experience with the divine, back to their culture, back to their system of faith, when they try to describe what they discover—their personal insights into **Truth**, their experience of **Love**—they are held back: by language, by those boxes of concept and culture within which we live, by those frames in which we think. Is it any wonder that those who actually walk with God are forced simply to say “**too deep for words**”?

But what if they **had** words? What if such pioneers could share a vocabulary, a “**vocabulary of concepts**”,

one big enough not only to describe, but also to explain their experience with God? What if each of us were offered a new perspective, one in which our true nature becomes clear? What if we all knew exactly what this world is for, so that peace-makers and mediators at least could begin on the same page? Could new truth about ourselves—about who and what we are, about what this world is for—help us as we try to make a difference, to help, to hear, to heal? But how do we access “**new truth**” about ourselves?

This is where these Urantia Papers may be able to help.

You remember that poet, in Palestine, almost 3,000 years ago, whispering to his God:

“What is man, that you are mindful of him?” [psalm 8:4]

Even today this remains a really good question: Why should the **Author of Reality** be interested in us? What’s one more planet-full of humans to the Creator of an eternal infinity? Well, this is precisely the question addressed by *The Urantia Book*.

Now, at first glance some may say, “well, they were a bit *long-winded*, weren’t they? 196 separate papers? Over 2,000 pages of dense text?” Others, like those of you who **know** the source of truth and love, may say “yes, but... they’ve made some **simple truths** way too complex.”

Ok. But if this answer is to be appropriate for the sceptical, scientific age ahead, if it is to be *sufficient*, satisfying for scientists and philosophers, for mystics and religionists alike, think what was required:

Before they could begin to explain our bodies and our minds, they had to adjust our basic assumptions about biology and psychology. **Before they could begin to explain** how worlds and stars and galaxies like ours evolve, they had to rework the foundations of our entire physics and cosmology. And before they could even **BEGIN** to explain how we are salvaged from death—how we are **salvaged from death**—they had to reveal something of that extraordinary domain which bridges the material and the spiritual. And of course our beliefs, ideas and experiences of “**the spiritual**” could do with some... clarification.

All this preliminary explaining and setting up implies... a biggish book. And here it is, all 2kg worth, as first printed. (No wonder they used to call it “**Big Blue**”!)

So, how do the authors of these papers answer that poet’s simple questions? What, do they say, is Man? Why, do they say, might **God** be “mindful of” us? Who **are** we? What **are we doing** here? What fresh ideas do these papers bring to the table? What revelations about ourselves do these revelators reveal?

Well, here we face an issue: while **personal** revelation of truth and love unfolds within, in ways “too deep for words”, a planetary, or **epochal** revelation, as these papers claim to be, must be planted in a form that we can (easily) share: as “words”, as a set of those “**ideas who’s time has come**”, as a framework of concepts that can be grafted onto those paradigms our various cultures have evolved.

And this is what is being attempted here. To allow them to present appropriate answers to these simple, crucial questions, the authors of these papers had to sketch out a cosmology, a “universe frame”, big enough and consistent enough to contain the answers they are attempting to give.

So *The Urantia Book* is offering us two things: the first is simply a description of the way things are, a new and wider **frame in which to think**; the second is something that required this wider frame: **a revelation about ourselves**.

* * *

Ok, so why should a new frame-in-which-to-think be interesting, let alone valuable? Well, just think about the struggles we have when we try simply to work together, to co-operate. When we talk about two people “**being on the same page**”, we imply they share similar assumptions and aspirations, a similar world-view. In this sense, we people of this world are not quite on the same page. Some of us are on a page that explains, in logical detail, how we can get to Paradise by blowing up a crowd of struggling souls; some of us are on a page that utterly fails to mention the Author of Reality, and explains, in logical detail, why “**greed is good**”. And many of us are on a page that is almost blank, wandering along alone, wondering what on Earth is going on.

In this sense, our very neighbors—our classmates and workmates—may be living a world apart, separated by conflicting beliefs about the world. In this same sense, these papers may be able to serve as a *Rosetta Stone*, helping translate our experience of reality, while helping reveal to us all a larger world.

To get a feel for the scope, and breadth of this larger view, we need only glance at the very first section of the book, those first 6 pages called “**Titles of the Papers**”. To anyone with some background in archaeology or philosophy, theology or physics, each of these titles will be provocative (if not outrageous!). But when read sequentially, and taken together, the more descriptive,

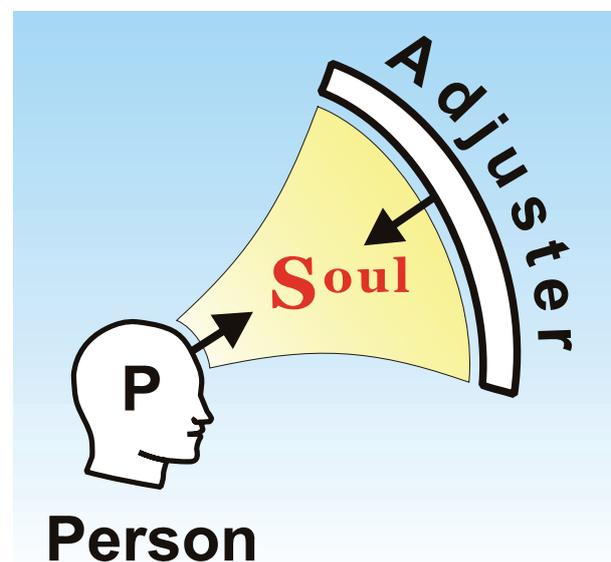


figure 4: Soul—a technique for salvaging us from death.

narrative papers help to set up an entire world view, a new and surprising description of reality. And this larger, deeper view will be needed if we are to understand the essence and purpose wrapped up within this book. This “essence and purpose” is a revelation about ourselves, which brings us to where William left off: consideration of Personality, Adjuster and Soul.

Now, **personality**: we all know what personality is. It’s ... hmmm. Well, **soul**: we all know precisely what the soul is. It’s ... hmmm. Well, **God**: we all know about this presence of God within. It’s ...

I think we would all agree, each of these rather important things have not been well understood. However, as William explained, these papers present each of these concepts in an entirely new light.

First, they reveal the true nature of Personality, an order of reality distinct from (and antecedent to) matter, mind and spirit.

Second, they reveal the true nature of the presence of God within—our ancient and higher self, the incarnating essence of eternal deity. Such mystical hints at some marvellous truth are expanded, clarified and made real to our minds via the concept of the “Adjuster”, the indwelling fragment of “our Father who art in Heaven”, the gift of spirit essence which is destined to define what we will be.

And third, they redefine the concept of the soul. They reveal soul to be the culmination of our mortal life, a phenomenon **created** by our wilful personality responding to our potential higher self. They also reveal how our soul, bridging the gulf between material life and spirit destiny, serves as a **technique** for salvaging us from death.

To help set the scene, let’s hear something from the authors themselves about each of these things:

About personality, they say this:

“The love of the Father absolutely individualizes each personality as a unique child of the Universal Father, a child without duplicate in infinity, a will creature irreplaceable in all eternity.” [p.138:4]

“Personality is the one changeless reality in an otherwise ever-changing creature experience; and it unifies all other associated factors of individuality. The personality is the unique bestowal which the Universal Father makes upon the living and associated energies of matter, mind, and spirit, and which survives with the survival of the morontial soul.” [p.9:1]

About the Adjuster, they say this:

“The Adjusters are the actuality of the Father’s love incarnate in the souls of men;” [p.1176:2]

“The Adjuster is an absolute essence of an infinite being” [p.1176:6]

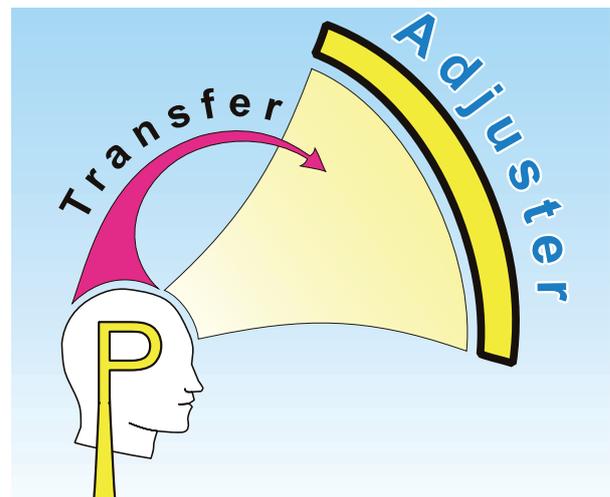


figure 5a: Soul—transferring the seat of identity.

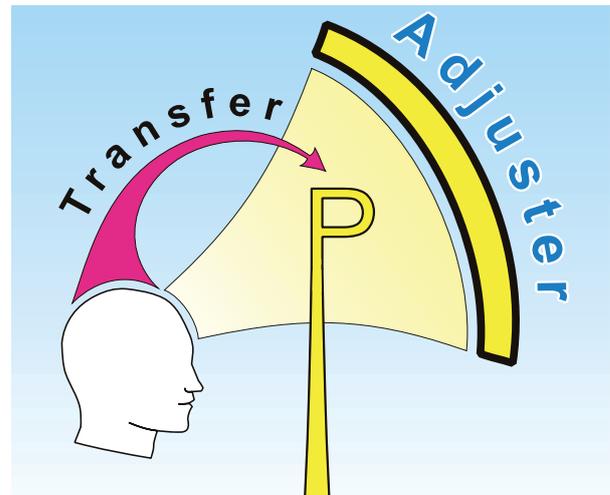


figure 5b: personality on the move..



figure 5c: a new relationship – two, about to become One.

And about the soul, they say this:

“Personality may survive mortal death with identity in the surviving soul. The Adjuster and the personality are changeless; the relationship between them (in the soul) is nothing but change, ” [p.1226:3]

Our separate cultures and our systems of faith have each evolved beliefs about these things. Such ideas may have been ideal and appropriate—within a culture, once

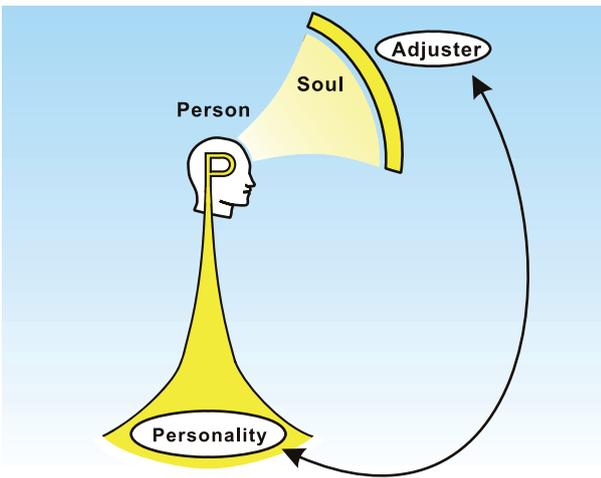


fig 6: the simplicity of our situation, the beauty of these relationships

Simplicity and complexity

But the simplicity of our situation, the beauty of these relationships, can be hidden by old words, and new jargon. Jesus said that we are the children of God. Jesus—the fourth epochal revelation of Truth to this world—revealed that the Universal Father is our Father; “***Our Father, who art in Heaven...***”. Simple. The most important and most simple truth a Person can ever know. A simple truth that trumps all the fourth epochal theology and philosophy our world has suffered.

But simplicity can hide a true complexity. Think of a child switching on a light. What could be more simple? But to the electrician, this is many problems to be solved: getting all that wiring in place, connecting with the power grid, the guarantees of safety... so that even a child need only flick a switch to fill a room with light.

upon a time. But now that our cultures overlap, how do we share our ideas and experiences? There are now so many different beliefs about the nature of ***the soul*** that it becomes hard to discuss the idea. Our experiences of the presence of God within are simply ***too deep for words***, so how can we even begin to discuss this? And we tend to think of ***personality*** merely as the way we react and respond, more an issue of psychology than of truth. Our reflection and discussion about these things has been stuck in those boxes of concept and culture within which we live, bound by those ***frames*** within which we think.

“Man must think in a mortal universe frame, but that does not mean that he cannot envision other and higher frames within which thought can take place.” [p.1260:3]

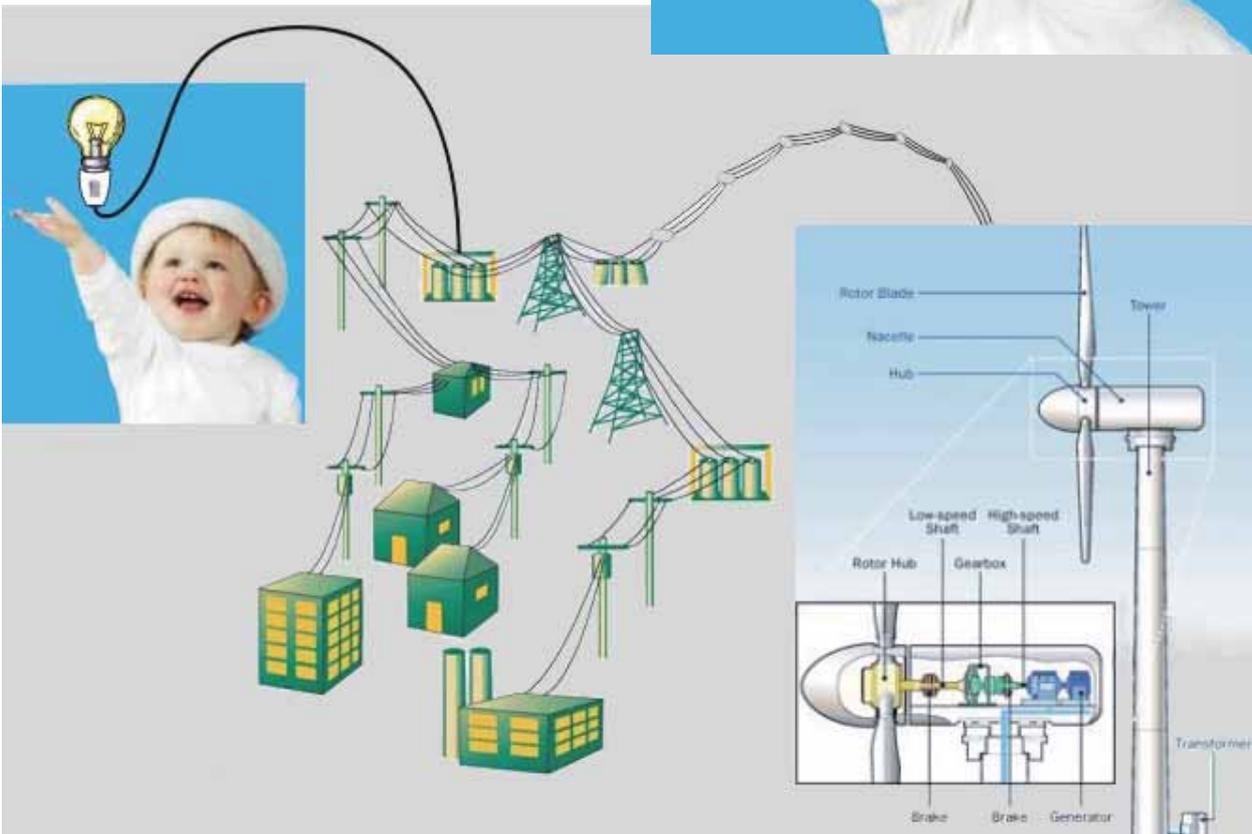


figure 7: simplicity from complexity

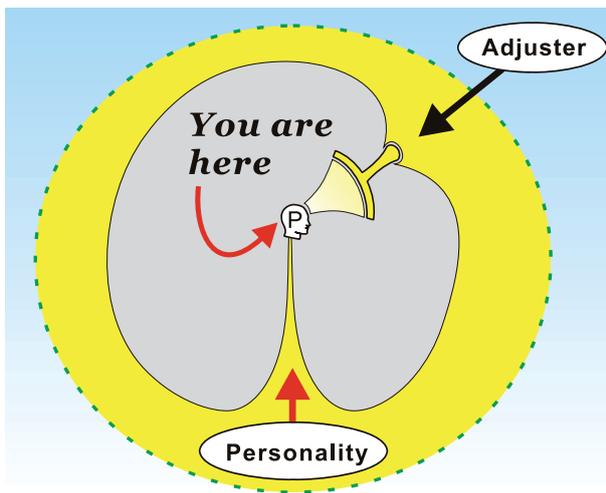


figure 7: baby persons – embryos in a larger frame.

Something like this is happening in space-time, and for us. Our father has made of this little world a home where we need only “flick a switch” to come to life. To be filled with that “true light which lights every man who comes into the world” we need only say “Yes!”, then hang on for the ride of our life!

This simple, central Truth, that God is our Father, is the tip of an iceberg; the simple, beautiful tip of a vast mountain of details, of mind boggling complexity. The relationships and interactions of spirit, mind and matter that allow us to exist; the tapestry of meanings and values that forms the fabric of the finite creation. But this is not our problem. Our Father’s Paradise Sons, have volunteered to resolve this complexity, to make smooth the way, to make possible our creation and perfection. All we need do is to live loyally each moment as tadpoles, to work our little tails off in the joyful adventure of growing up:

“The quickest way for a tadpole to become a frog is to live loyally each moment as a tadpole.” [p.1094:6]

Conclusion

The Urantia Papers reveal **personality** to be so fundamental—as first source of everything and the destiny of all—that the Universal Father did not, or could not, delegate its care. The Papers also reveal an absolute transition—of particles of personality into free-will universe Sons.

This transition is caused by the Universal Father, and powered by love: **“Let us make mortal man in our own image.”** This request by the Father becomes a command through the Son. The hosts of Havona stir, the machinery of Paradise responds, the most wondrous adventure begins: **SONS**, made as if from nothing to become ones like the Father; made from mortal stuff on the worlds of time; in the quiet places of a qualified, finite space. We are told that such transformations are an opportunity unique to this brief **AGE OF TIME**, but we are left to guess what ramifications may ripple from our birth.

So what’s **Love** got to do with it? Jesus was once asked by his apostles if it was really a good idea to make *love* the central theme of their message. How could a mere ideal like love compete with Roman swords?

Jesus rarely showed strong emotion, but that day in Archelais, when it became clear that his team of apostles still had almost no idea about love, he could not hold himself back. He knew love, he came to us directly from it’s Source and Center:

“But I declare to you that my Father in Paradise does rule a universe of universes by the compelling power of his love. Love is the greatest of all spirit realities. Truth is a liberating revelation, but love is the supreme relationship.” [p.1608:1]

Within the frame set up by these papers, we can now trace the rise and role of **LOVE**, from the eternal core of the Absolute directly into the human heart. We were meant to be here, we are not alone, and every single one of us is very greatly **LOVED**. ■

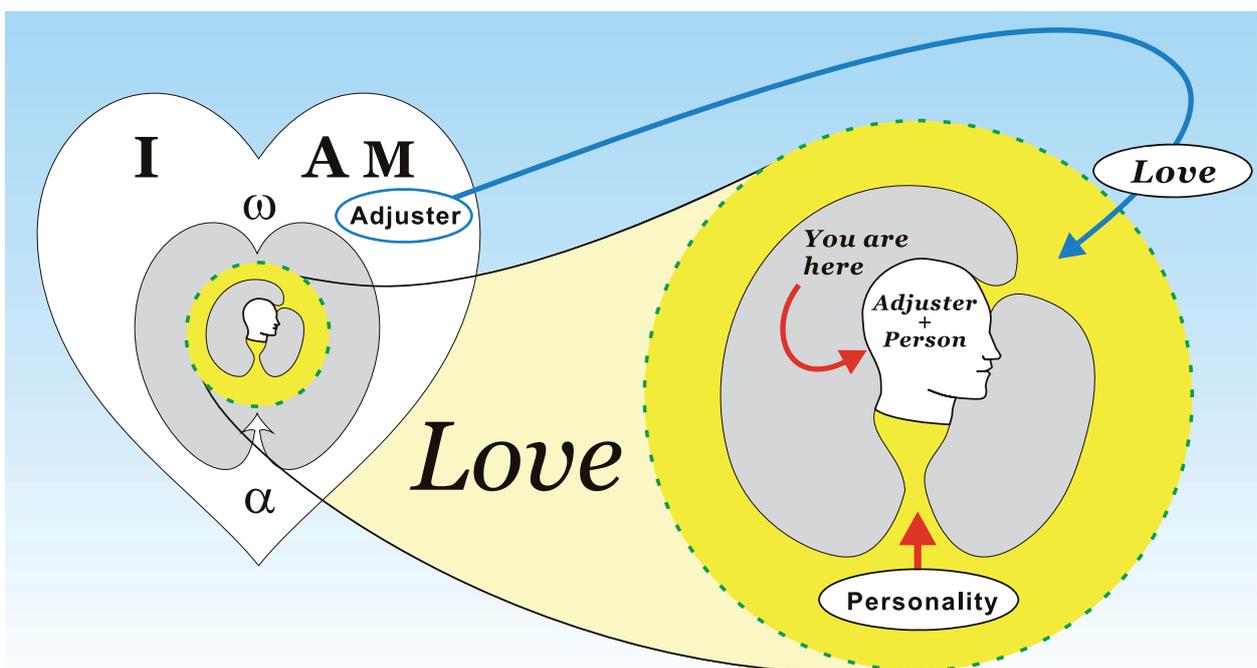


figure 8: “Let us make mortal man in our own image.” [pp. 78:3, 85:5, 110:7]

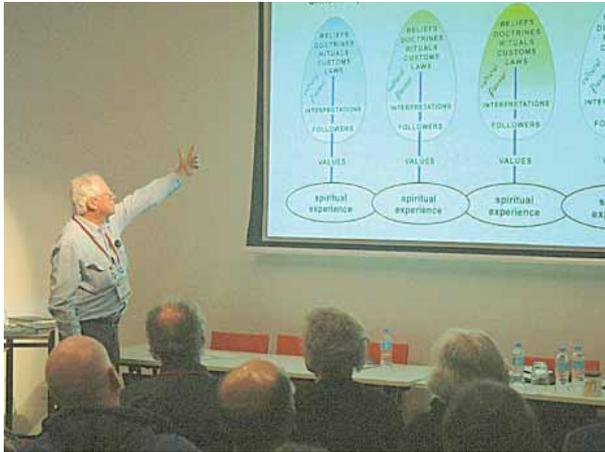
Parliament of World's Religions Conference



Lot's of interest in our booth.



The Urantia team, a fine example of international cooperation.



ANZURA president, William Wentworth delivering his presentation.



Nigel Nunn speaking of the enlarged truths to be found in The Urantia Book.

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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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