

# THE ARENA

## ANZURA

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The Australian and New Zealand  
URANTIA Association

June 1996

### THE MIND ARENA OF CHOICE

*"Mind is your ship, the Adjuster is your pilot, the human will is captain." (page 1217)*

## Editor's Notebook

Humans have a great urge to be free. Thankfully, liberty is a characteristic of the Universe. But liberty to do what? Freedom to behave in what way?

For finaliters, *true liberty* is the freedom to perform in eternity; to be allowed to become their eternal selves. False liberty is the freedom to behave in ways which eternity cannot accommodate.

For humans, the only way to eternity is with a Thought Adjuster. Lucifer had lost his belief in the Universal Father. Thus to him the Thought Adjusters, said to coexist with ascending mortals, were at best a myth, at worst a disturbing parasite.

In his early days as a bright young thing, Lucifer would have been painstakingly instructed about the value of the mortal ascenders. About the glorious eternal careers prepared for all those who succeed in the long climb to Paradise. But in his mind, he eventually reduced

*( continued on page 7 )*

# READERS

## URANTIA BOOK

### C O N F E R E N C E

- ◆ **Dates:** Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October to  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 1996.
  - ◆ **Venue:** Blackfriars Reception Centre  
Canberra, ACT
  - ◆ **Full Conference Rate:** Aust \$170
  - ◆ **Contacts:** Nigel Nunn Vern Verass  
06 252 1465 06 285 1827
- or ANZURA phone & fax 02 9970 6200
- Please see registration brochure enclosed!

### THE ARENA

PO Box 609, Narrabeen, NSW 2101, Australia

*The Arena is a quarterly publication dedicated to the promotion of goodwill and understanding among readers of The URANTIA Book and is supportive of URANTIA Foundation.*

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Preparations for the October conference in Canberra are progressing well, but please register early to help with our planning.

- *Come and see the multimedia extravaganza depicting the Adjutants pulling humans from the primeval soup;*
- *Have your bubble of concepts blown up (inflated)*
- *Air frustrations and give ambitious plans perspective*

All this and more! Looking forward to seeing you all there. *Ed.*

## So They Say

### More planets found!

The fourth nearest star to the sun, Lalande 21185, appears to have one or more planets orbiting it. They are about four times closer than any of the planets discovered outside the solar system.

It is suggested that two planets the size of Jupiter orbit Lalande 21185. One circles the star at about the same distance as Saturn does from the sun. The other lies closer. The distant planet takes 30 years to circle its star, while the nearer one takes 6 years to orbit.

Lalande 21185 is so weak that it can't be seen with the naked eye. It belongs to the red dwarf class of stars.

### And another !!

*"Just heard on the radio this morning that astronomers have found another planet. It is 8.1 light years from us (the closest one yet I think) and is about the same distance from its Sun as Saturn is from ours."*

## News Around The World

### World Wide Web

URANTIA Foundation's Australian office has opened a home page on the World Wide Web. They have information about the Australian office, on line ordering of *The URANTIA Book* and other materials along with information. Also included is information about ANZURA, ANZURA's URANTIA Book readers annual conference and subscribing to *The Arena* Newsletter. Their Web page has a hot link to URANTIA Foundation's (Chicago) Web page where you can see detailed information, join the international readers discussion group (Urantial) and even browse *The URANTIA Book* on-line. So if you have a computer, a modem, Internet access, and a web browser you can visit their site at the following address:

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~urantia>

### Autoevolution

Professor John Campbell is a professor of neurobiology at the University of California's School of Medicine. In April he addressed an Australian Academy of Science symposium at the Acton Science Dome, the famous building rising mushroom-like from the grounds of the Australian National University.

A full house heard him predict that groups of humans will soon direct their own evolution – autoevolve – by manipulating the genetic base of human embryos.

He said autoevolution would be more than the elimination of genes which cause defects and disease. Autoevolution would involve the manipulation of the

human genome so that new humans would be manifest "improvements" on their forebears in terms of intelligence, longevity and other factors.

"I suspect that, eventually, every possible change will be explored: musical ability, metabolic advancement, and what have you."

His strongest image at the academy was the prediction that within 300 to 350 years the beings at the leading edge of human autoevolution will be so genetically different from us that they will be another species.

"Within 12 generations some of our descendants will have advanced as far beyond us as we are ahead of the apes."

As Campbell wrote in 1995, human germinal cell lines could be grown in cultures and reconstituted into embryos.

"This is no more original than extending to humans the technology presently in use for mice," he wrote. "Human cell lines might even be tailored to form particular parts of chimeric persons, such as the brains or gonads, with the rest of the body coming from cells of a different constitution."

Campbell's message is twofold. First, autoevolution is a good idea: "I see it as very positive, and I think that people in the future will see it as positive," he said. "Part of the problem is that it proposes major changes to what we have now in our philosophy and value system; therefore people are hostile. But, it seems to me, any person who benefits from this increase in mentality or longevity or whatever, will be very appreciative of what happened." Secondly, he sees it as inevitable, regardless of the many moral, social, religious or legal obstacles along the way. This is not an illogical conclusion in the wake of the previous 3.5 billion years of life's evolution on Earth.

When he looks back on that long story he sees that new species or adaptations "evolve rapidly from very tiny outgroups of individuals", not from social consensus amongst whole populations. When he looks back on the much shorter history of humanity, about 1.5 million years,

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he sees that individual humans have always adopted strategies which enable them to maximise their own chances of survival and dominance over their destiny and to then extend these advantages to their progeny.

This leads to the plausible conclusion that well-resourced individuals or small groups will undertake autoevolution as the technological tools become available over the next century. These enclaves, centred on wealthy individuals or pioneering genetic researchers – or both – could resemble anything from religious sects to philanthropic or professional organisations.

Each autoevolutionary group would focus on different methods and different evolutionary goals. “The things that I foresee will be major changes but I think they will all be in the same direction as the sorts of changes in the past which we would see as elevating our species from apes and others,” said Campbell. “When (future generations) look back on us they will say: ‘Yeah, we really have a better set of people now than those primitive yahoos that were running around in the twentieth century’.”

Autoevolvers could be deemed to be criminals in many societies. They would be likely to be regarded, at least, as threatening and unorthodox by society in general, and “evil” by religious groups and some environmental advocates. But this is compatible with the evolutionary model. Evolution is not a democratic process and never will be.

“This sort of thing is going to occur, it seems to me it is inevitable. The ideal way would be to start thinking about it early because early on I think there is a possibility of exerting control on which way things go”.

To understand what is really happening, and what possibilities are in fact imminent, requires some expertise in biology. One Australian with the right credentials is Sir Gustav Nossal, president of the Academy of Science, who was in the audience when Professor Campbell gave his presentation. Like most other informed commentators, Sir Gustav respects the scientific integrity of Campbell’s analysis. He is wary of endorsing its full implications, but he encourages debate.

“My position would still be to be against what Professor Campbell says because I think some unintended harm that you might cause, which is then passed down through the generations, is an ethically very dubious thing,” Sir Gustav told me. He conceded, however, that his concerns exist in a time frame which is much shorter than Campbell’s scenario.

“I think it is good that (Campbell) challenges us. Because in a 30-year time frame human perceptions do change, and I don’t think I am wise enough to know what my grandchildren might think.”

“I don’t even know how you would begin to present a view like Campbell’s to the general public, but let us engage the debate and let us not be unruly about it. Let’s be a bit open and a bit tolerant.”

Says Professor Campbell about himself: “I’d say I’m out there on the edge. People haven’t really thought about this at all.” I think he likes it out there. He expects others will join him and move further out, evolving as fast as they can.

*From an article in The Canberra Times, June 9, 1996  
by Simon Grose.*

## ANZURA Membership News

**Study Day** – Thanks to all those who participated in the National Study Day on March 23rd. As far as I am aware, six groups around the two countries met and had a great day of fellowship and discussion. A new group of some old time readers met in Melbourne and some met one another for the first time.

Some new contacts were made in the East Gippsland district. The Sydney group made a weekend of it and some travelled from far and wide to attend. Other groups met in Brisbane/Gold Coast, Canberra and Auckland.

Some readers in North Queensland intended to meet but were thwarted due to poor weather conditions. Thanks to those who were prepared to be hosts had any new readers contacted them.

It’s still early days and we need to be in readiness for when new readers desire contact with other readers. While most who attended the meetings were regular readers, there were several new faces who appeared in some of the meetings.

The next study day will be held around the weekend of Michael’s birthday in August. Stay tune for more details.

**Web Site** – For anyone whose into the Internet, we now have a Web site for the Australian Foundation Office. As part of this site there is info on ANZURA and The Arena as well as hot link to The Foundation’s Web site in Chicago. See the article “*World Wide Web*” on page 2, then dial us up at <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~urantia>.

**AGM** – This year’s AGM will be held during the Canberra conference. An agenda will be going out to members in September. If anyone has anything to be placed on the agenda please send the details to me before August 31st. This is a great opportunity to meet with other members so I hope you can make it.

Fond regards to all, and looking forward to seeing you in Canberra.

Kathleen Swadling  
Secretary, ANZURA

## Discussions from UrantiaL

An international internet discussion group for URANTIA Book readers.  
urantial@www.urantial.org

### The Soul

*On May 8, 1996 Linda Swanson sent out a plea for help by writing:*

“In my most recent encounter, while discussing the soul and survival, a few questions were asked of me which I couldn’t answer. I know there are those of you who can put things in perspective so I can continue this conversation with a nonreader who is truly on a spiritual search. Knowing that the soul is the evolving *you* which has value and that’s what will survive... what happens to the negative thoughts, deeds, evil, sinful part that doesn’t survive? These are still energies. We were talking of the evil people in the world, and even though they appear totally evil, they might have just a glimmer of something of value which will survive eventually, especially if, after doing all evil, then start to become spiritually led.”

*Duane Faw from California then answered:*

“I like to think of the soul as a carbon copy of that which we contribute to the Supreme. It is our contribution to the growth of the Supreme. It is those portions of our total experiences which have spiritual value and survival potential. It is an “experiential acquirement” shared with the existential Thought Adjuster.

Jesus said to Nicodemus “You must be born again.” To conventional Christianity this “new birth” is the spiritual high upon making a conscious choice to survive. This is also referred to as “conversion”. Some see this as the birth of the soul.

Paradoxically, some say that without this experience the “soul” will burn in hell forever. Where did this “soul” come from if it had no beginning? To me the concept of “new birth” is an euphemism for co-creating something of spiritual value out of physical things and activities. It is the co-creating of something real from something unreal. It begins (is born) when we make the proper choice in our first moral decision, and grows—decision by decision—throughout our lives. Wrong decisions are of no spiritual value and result in no spiritual growth. The correct decisions are absorbed into the Supreme. Also, they are retained by our guardian seraphim and are part of our unique personalities. This is how we co-create our own souls.

*“As a mortal creature chooses to “do the will of the Father in heaven,” so the indwelling spirit becomes the father of a new reality in human experience. The mortal and material mind is the*

*mother of this same emerging reality. The substance of this new reality is neither material nor spiritual—it is morontial. This is the emerging and immortal soul which is destined to survive mortal death and begin the Paradise ascension.”*  
(P. 8.10)

In my view, nothing of survival value is ever lost. It becomes a part of the Supreme even if its co-creator elects not to survive. Negative thoughts, deeds, etc. are “unreal” spiritually and in time will fall away—as will the persons who elect non-survival.

They will be as if they never were.”

### The Love of a Thought Adjuster

On Sunday, June 2, 1996 Rob Crickett sent this reply to Julianne during a discussion on *Nonviolence*.

*“My friend, Tom Choquette, feeds street children, especially around the holidays, and talks to them, in Everett, Washington. He said to me: If you can save one child out of 1,000, you are doing pretty well. I can’t think of one out of 1,000 turning into a parent with any kind of reality grasp, and the stories of hopelessness and despair are frightening. Is it too late for these children who are having children? What are we to do with their children... should they survive?”*

*Thanks, Julianne*

For some years I have been involved in helping drug users here in Melbourne. In the early days I found myself struggling to make spiritual sense out of the impoverishment of personal resources one brings to the task of trying to help, and the seeming hopelessness of the whole field of Alcohol & Drug recovery.

One New Year’s eve, after I had exhaustively plumbed and all but given up hope of finding any spiritual value in working with drug users, I was driving to work for an overnight shift at a residential detox. As I drove along, Father asked me to conduct a spiritual group, irrespective of the requests of the residents at the unit to engage in other seasonal activities for the evening. So I did just that.

The group found itself focusing on the certainty of God’s companionship in life, and his continued care after death. I found myself particularly drawn to the indwelling father presence in each of the participants: three heroin users, two men and a pregnant women in their early-mid twenties. As I followed the leadings of their adjusters,

*( continued next page )*

( *Adjuster love, from previous page* )

the group became an absolute delight, and was much talked about by those three in the days to follow.

One by one the three finally discharged themselves from the program and new clients came in. It was two weeks after that group that I learned of the news that the young mum-to-be was murdered in a drug deal set up by her boyfriend, that had gone horribly wrong. Both she and the baby died.

Grief and shock struck all the staff in the program. She was such a sweetheart, so desperate to get her life together for the baby's sake. My grief was lifted when Father gave me a talking to about the value of working directly with the individual's Adjuster, according to the Adjuster's agenda for the individual.

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*the last opportunities he would  
have had to sow morontian seeds*

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Upon reflection, I could remember the enthusiasm with which her Adjuster had poured forth his love and assurance to her, flooding the room, convincingly, and it struck me as possibly one of the last opportunities he would have had to sow Morontian seeds. That's what it actually seemed like to me at the time, that he was somehow sowing seeds in her mind that would count when she died. I remember my final thoughts on that episode: her Adjuster was working so diligently right to the so-called last breath for her salvation, from his love ... loving father rescuing his daughter at all cost.

Father's lesson in that episode changed the way I relate to the hopelessness of the world, by affording me his vision of the endless hope and opportunity which exists in the mortal's desire for God and the Adjuster's desire for personalness. I would recommend his ideas to any members on the list who may be traversing the same ministerial ground: much in the world is lost to the forces of the world but every person's adjuster, virgin, experienced or self acting, is so vitally eager to assist, so try promoting the opportunity to engage their efforts and thus also help them to exercise their desire for personalisation.

Yours ...

In the personalness of God

and the wonderfulness of Jesus.

## The Heavy Thinker

It started out innocently enough. I began to think at parties now and then to loosen up. Inevitably though, one thought led to another, and soon I was more than just a social thinker.

I began to think alone – “to *relax*,” I told myself – but I knew it wasn't true. Thinking became more and more important to me, and finally I was thinking all the time.

I began to think on the job. I knew that thinking and employment don't mix, but I couldn't stop myself.

I began to avoid friends at lunchtime so I could read Thoreau and Kafka. I would return to the office dizzied and confused, asking, “What is it exactly we are doing here?”.

Things weren't going so great at home either. One evening I had turned off the TV and asked my wife about the meaning of life. She spent that night at her mother's.

I soon had a reputation as a heavy thinker. One day the boss called me in. He said, “Skippy, I like you, and it hurts me to say this, but your thinking has become a real problem. If you don't stop thinking on the job, you'll have to find another job.” This gave me a lot to think about.

I came home early after my conversation with the boss. “Honey,” I confessed, “I've been thinking...”

“I know you've been thinking,” she said, “and I want a divorce!”

“But Honey, surely it's not that serious.”

“It is serious,” she said, lower lip aquiver. “You think as much as college professors, and college professors don't make any money, so if you keep on thinking we won't have any money!”

“That's a faulty syllogism,” I said impatiently, and she began to cry. I'd had enough. “I'm going to the library,” I snarled as I stomped out the door.

I headed for the library, in the mood for some Nietzsche, with a PBS station on the radio. I roared into the parking lot and ran up to the big glass doors... they didn't open. The library was closed.

\* \* \*

To this day, I believe that a Higher Power was looking out for me that night.

As I sank to the ground clawing at the unfeeling glass, whimpering for Zarathustra, a poster caught my eye. “Friend, is heavy thinking ruining your life?” it asked. You probably recognize that line. It comes from the standard Thinker's Anonymous poster.

Which is why I am what I am today: a recovering thinker. I never miss a TA meeting. At each meeting we watch a non-educational video; last week it was “Porky's.” Then we share experiences about how we avoided thinking since the last meeting.

I still have my job, and things are a lot better at home. Life just seemed... easier, somehow, as soon as I stopped thinking.

(author unknown)

## Articles

### Time Lag of Justice

*Trevor Swadling, Sydney, Australia*

There are some statements in *The URANTIA Book* which imply that mortal creatures have a part to play in the final termination of the Lucifer and planetary rebellion. I have often pondered these statements in the book and would be interested to hear what other readers think about what is required to wind up the rebellion. Are the authors implying that we, as the human race, have a role to play in the final adjudication?

We know that Lucifer and Satan are behind bars but we also know that Caligastia still roams free, albeit stripped of any powers. Why is Caligastia free while the other two locked up? The book tells us the following:

*“On Jerusem the personal representative of the Supreme Executive of Orvonton counselled Gabriel to foster full opportunity for every living creature to mature a deliberate choice in those matters involved in the Lucifer Declaration of Liberty. The issues of rebellion having been raised, the Paradise emergency adviser of Gabriel portrayed that, if such full and free opportunity were not given all Norlatiadek creatures, then would the Paradise quarantine against all such possible half-hearted or doubt-stricken creatures be extended in self-protection against the entire constellation. To keep open the Paradise doors of ascension to the beings of Norlatiadek, it was necessary to provide for the full development of rebellion and to insure the complete determination of attitude on the part of all beings in any way concerned therewith.” (P.617 - §10 9)*

Is our world concerned or involved? If so, then is the above implying that as humans we must strike an attitude as to true and false liberty? It seems obvious to me that Lucifer and Satan are locked up because the universe creatures who were under their rule have all made their choices. All that remains is for the final adjudication. However Caligastia hasn't been locked up yet as all the creatures in his previous domain of rulership (we mortals) have still not made up their minds. The book tells us:

*“In the event of rebellion on a system headquarters, a new sovereign is usually installed within a comparatively short time, but not so on the individual planets. They are the component units of the material creation, and creature free will is a factor in the final adjudication of all such problems.” (P.394 - §1)*

*“Creature free will is a factor in...”* Does this imply that we mortals as individuals and as a civilisation, must come to grips and make decisions in regard to true and false liberty? It's a bit like someone witnessing a murder - like it or not, they are involved in the outcome of justice. In regard to the rebellion: mortals may be totally unconscious of the facts, but still may have to make decisions in regard to the problems it caused.

One theory of mine is: when the world has attained the era of light and life or the threshold thereof, through free will choosing, hard work, in trying to do and to live the will of God, will this in turn signify that we have attained true liberty and through this achievement bring about the final adjudication of the rebellion? Will this pave the way for our reception and the return of Christ Michael? After all the book makes it quite clear that if the teachings of Jesus are universally adopted then we are nearing the threshold of the era of light and life.

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*so, so near and appealing to  
our natural tendencies*

---

It's obvious to me that the vast, vast majority of us would not even contemplate adopting the doctrines of Lucifer. But the insidious thing I find about what he did and tried to implement was that it was so, so near and appealing to our natural tendencies that it all became for us a bit of a blur. So does the human race now have to work through all this so that we can clearly see the difference between the outcomes of false liberty and true liberty? *The URANTIA Book* tells us the way to overcome the evil and sin of false personal liberty and to obtain true liberty is to embrace the teachings of Jesus.

*“This liberty to choose for oneself is an endowment of the Supreme Rulers, and they will not permit any being or group of beings to deprive a single personality in the wide universe of this divinely bestowed liberty—not even to satisfy such misguided and ignorant beings in the enjoyment of this misnamed personal liberty.” (P.615 - §3)*

In regard to sentencing the rebels the book tells us:

*“But if this universe rebel against the reality of truth and goodness refuses to approve the verdict, and if the guilty one knows in his heart the justice of his condemnation but refuses to make such confession, then must the execution of sentence be delayed in accordance with the discretion of the Ancients of Days. (Does this sound like the position Caligastia has taken?) And the Ancients of Days refuse to annihilate any being until all moral values and all spiritual realities are extinct, both in the evildoer and in all related supporters and possible sympathisers.” (P.615 - §5)*

*Time is  
what keeps everything  
from happening at once.*

*Space is  
what keeps everything  
from happening in the same place.*

*Personality is  
what keeps everything  
from happening to you.*

What do they mean here? Are they referring to consciously sympathising with him personally, or, consciously or unconsciously, supporting the doctrines of false liberty? Are the Ancients of Days waiting for us to make decisions in regard to true and false liberty before they give the justice order to snuff the rebels?

*“The Faithful of Days on Edentia advised the Constellation Fathers to allow the rebels free course to the end that all sympathy for these evildoers should be the sooner uprooted in the hearts of every present and future citizen of Norlatiadek—every mortal, morontia, or spirit creature.” (P.617 - §9 8)*

Note it says “**every present and FUTURE citizen...**”. I think that includes us guys and all future mortal inhabitants of Urantia.

*“The Divine Minister of Salvington issued as her third independent proclamation a mandate directing that nothing be done to half cure, cowardly suppress, or otherwise hide the hideous visage of rebels and rebellion.” (P.617 - §11 10)*

*“The angelic hosts were directed to work for full disclosure and unlimited opportunity for sin-expression as the quickest technique of achieving the perfect and final cure of the plague of evil and sin.” (P.618 - §0)*

Are they implying in the above quotes that the best way to help wind this up is for us to see, so to speak, face to face the consequences of false liberty and then be given the real opportunity to reject them and cure ourselves?

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*every present and FUTURE citizen...*

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So in conclusion, maybe the inhabitants of URANTIA have a roll to play. When our planetary community embraces the teachings of Jesus this may be the last stroke that completely ends the rebellion and the rebels themselves. Then, when Urantians have finally made a choice between true and false liberty, the planetary circuits will be reinstalled for the spiritual planetary administrators to utilise once again.

Maybe Michael has enough faith in us and believes that we can work through this by embracing his teachings. We have been given all we need to tackle it, so why would he come back before we had earned and longed for a visit from him anyway?

*“There are an equal number of reasons for not arbitrarily stopping the Lucifer rebellion which would be partially comprehensible to you, but which I am not permitted to narrate. I may inform you that on Uversa we teach forty-eight reasons for permitting evil to run the full course of its own moral bankruptcy and spiritual extinction. I doubt not that there are just as many additional reasons not known to me.” (P.618 - §3)*

Well maybe I’ve bitten of more than I can chew here—all shall be revealed, as they say. I’d be interested to hear some thoughts on this topic.

*( Editor's Notebook, from page 1 )*

humans to mere natural phenomena, with no greater destiny than ordinary seraphim (“*See how they always return to these humble spheres*”).

Lucifer may have convinced himself that humans were a joke to be pitied, not the vast cosmic art in which he had been trained to believe.

*“Why not let them grasp for whatever small satisfactions come within their pathetic reach?”*

Lucifer would have had us build sandcastles of adjutant excitement and morontia satisfaction, rather than citizenship throughout eternity.

Having replaced reality with a delusion in his mind, Lucifer needed to redefine liberty. With the Father and reality dismissed, this child philosopher reinvented the equivalent of materialism.

We mortals of Urantia are infected with a variety of concepts about liberty. The lures of false liberty continue to mobilise many supporters here.

Insight and depth of experience tend to determine the type of liberty sought.

See Trevor Swadling’s article in this issue, *The time lag of Justice*, for a discussion of this problem, and the ramifications of Lucifer’s delusion.



for best supporting actor  
for James Cromwell  
"an enchanted bit of acting,"  
says Dennis King  
of the Tulsa World  
(and a more joyous bit for an  
actor I cannot imagine);

and best director  
Chris Noonan,  
a relative unknown  
with whose effort I am amazed;

and best picture!  
Oh, there's stiff competition.  
Ron Howard's patriotic,  
thrilling *Apollo 13*,  
(Hollywood loves its own.)

But who cares who wins.  
That it's this much honored at all  
is astounding.

Because it's  
simple,  
sweet,  
enchanting,  
no explosions,  
no car chases,  
no drugs.  
Some blood.  
Some violence.  
It's "only" animal blood and  
violence though.  
It's quiet,  
yet hip!  
Subtle in its fine pacing.  
It's not even set in America!  
Amazing that it got this far at all.  
Just like the subject of the film.

Amazing that it got this far at all.

Okay, maybe you won't find it  
beautiful.  
If you don't, you don't.  
Maybe you think I'm weird  
to enthuse so for this  
(and I feel uncomfortable  
to lay my pearls before  
even such a relatively closed  
forum, for

we are not all close),

but as I watch this beauty  
with my wife and children,  
and we all laugh and cry together,  
I know what beauty is,  
in its true and good form.

There's just something about it.  
Even the words used about it,  
like this caption  
on the front page  
of the Entertainment section,  
underneath the picture,  
saying,  
a little child shall lead them.

When I saw it had been released  
in the store, I picked it up  
almost automatically.  
(I almost always rent, not buy.)  
Too rare is the work  
I would truly call  
inSpired.

And too rarely are even such works  
so morontially beautiful.

Sorry for being **so** roundabout.  
If you missed it at the theaters,  
I hesitantly recommend  
(hesitantly I say,  
for what is beauty, who knows?)  
that you rent it.

Hope you have a relatively big  
screen on a quality color  
television, though,  
to give this work the  
stage it deserves,  
its visuals as rich and colorful  
as the characters (human and  
otherwise),  
and the story  
which avoided cliches,  
refused to descend to sappy  
or gratuitously manipulative,  
and with all the innocence  
of a farmer doing a jig for a pig,  
it'll charm your pants off.

It's beautiful.  
Babe.

## Food for Thought

"Moral cowards never achieve high planes of philosophic thinking; it requires courage to invade new levels of experience and to attempt the exploration of unknown realms of intellectual living." (page 1114)

"An effective philosophy of living is formed by a combination of cosmic insight and the total of one's emotional reactions to the social and economic environment. Remember: While inherited urges cannot be fundamentally modified, emotional responses to such urges can be changed; therefore the moral nature can be modified, character can be improved. In the strong character emotional responses are integrated and co-ordinated, and thus is produced a unified personality. Deficient unification weakens the moral nature and engenders unhappiness." (page 1572)

"The Thought Adjusters would like to change your feelings of fear to convictions of love and confidence; but they cannot mechanically and arbitrarily do such things; that is your task. In executing those decisions which deliver you from the fetters of fear, you literally supply the psychic fulcrum on which the Adjuster may subsequently apply a spiritual lever of uplifting and advancing illumination." (page 1192)

## A short biography

*Cathy Hoffman, Melbourne, Australia*

Does anyone know the meaning of “being Jewish”? I don’t. Is it racial? Religious? An attitude? A reservation? A Grudge, a ‘No!’ to the majority style, a fate? Whatever, - I was that.

Because of some wilfulness about being “other” I early embraced my mother’s racial religion as my own. It was an embrace of vigour and defiance. I defined large proud chunks of myself with it. As a kid, I liked boastfully saying, “I’m a Jew.”, - liked what it did to people’s faces, the negative power of it.

As for him, poor Jesus of the Christians, well, as a young punk widgie, I liked him, despite my innate rebelliousness. He was a hero, no question. He said what he meant, meant what he said, he risked all safety, energy, vision, and died with love in his heart. He was a mensch. Also, as some of those lascivious statues and paintings of him said, Christ Jesus was pure man, he looked real good to the eye!

But taking on Jewishness meant Jesus was the mistake of the world. He was self-delusion, mass self-deception. He was the madness of the planet. So I pointed myself to the Sinai God of the desert. I stayed on in the wrestle with him. In my 27th year two things happened. The first was, after the millionth bout, and no K.O., I threw in the towel. I decided to believe that God was God. It was just there, my love for God, without any of the “proof” I sought. That June afternoon I decided to believe I went for a shaky walk. On the footpath I found a tiny, copper crucifix. I, a Jew, and who had never found a thing in my life, gawped at the ground, red with embarrassment. I didn’t believe in signs or nudges from the universe. I still don’t. But I snatched up that cross and pocketed it, hoping no one, including myself, saw me do that. Twenty years later, I still have it.

The other thing that happened was *The Urantia Book*. This pony-tailed guy at the library I worked at, kept taking it out all year. ‘Hey what’s this thing, man?’ I drawled all hip to this nice, inoffensive obsessive. I was about to stamp it for him for the ninth time, as he said, ‘Take a peek, just one.’

I took that peek, just one. I went light in the head.

‘Not this time, pal’, I lied to poor John Lipscombe, ‘this book’s on reservation.’ John shrugged. He didn’t care. He was moving on, onto hotter reads, Alice Bailey, I think, and a tract called “Course on Miracles”. Or was it “Curse”? Meow!

I took *The Urantia Book* home. I read and read. What can I say! It blew off my head! I read and read and never stopped. For years I read from it every single day, simultaneously nodding and shaking my head, going “no, no, no” and “Yes! Yes!. Yes!” At the end of a decade’s

wrestle whose bouts and scars are not worth repeating here, I came to see that *The Urantia Book* was exactly what it claimed it was.

As for any serious reader, so for me, there were lots of stumbles. The chief thorn, for a Jew, of course was Michael of Nebadon, Jesus Christ. Accordingly, I did not concern myself with Part IV. That is, I read it, did not take it in, put it in metal file marked “Later”, zipped it up and stashed in deep freeze. I kept on reading Parts I, II and III struck by the following qualities of it.

First, it is a document to and from the spirit. The book works by a total capture of the mind. It completely meets the intellectual requirements of coherence, organisation, logic and by a near-miraculously snagless internal consistency over 2000 pages.

Second, it is a work void of whim, flaw, contradiction or eccentricity.

Third, and this is the most dazzling quality of the book, its truth-factor, the idea-content. The reading of this book’s assertions, revelations and information was accompanied by a sense of almost mathematical necessity, a cognition that, ‘Yes, this alone makes sense!’ The effect of it was a ‘Yes, of course!’ and that things were so, have had to be so, and not otherwise. For example, of course planet earth is not the only one God every thought of making; and; no, of course, we cannot be the only life and therefore the moral centre of the universe! And; if Christ was real, he couldn’t possibly have chosen the acute biological abnormality of entering the world through a virgin-birth, or put demons into poor pigs, or do show-off stunts like walk on water. Things like that.

*The Urantia Book’s* logic seemed spotless and exact. Its information seems to come from the nature of reality itself. What it says appears to be a description of the way things have been made, a description of the way things, do in fact, work. What I mean about the book’s truth-factor is that its idea-content seems to be a description of reality itself. The movement, logic and organisation of the book’s information seems to ‘click’ with the mind when it is working normally. Its logic fits flush with the human mind’s working. The prime quality of *The Urantia Book* is its Ring-of-Truth. However, for me, there was the problem of Christ.

I had accepted the entirety of *The Urantia Book* as fact. Therefore, this was the issue; could a work offering itself as a description of reality in one and a half thousand pages of faultlessness be in error as to the content of its last quarter?

Could *The Urantia Book* have got everything without exception perfectly right and be mistaken in its revelation on a matter as fundamental as Christ?

You couldn’t just select the bits you liked and ditch the rest. It was not a piecemeal work but a total, integrated whole. The authority behind the lot of it was the same source.

However much I didn't want to believe in Christ, I had to bite the bullet on this one. Either the lot of *The Urantia Book* was a fraud, or it was just what it said it was. Luckily, over the years, my heart and mind had been doing some work.

My grown-up's position had become; no, Jesus was not God's Son. But who was he?

In all respect for truth, and in care for the spiritual realities of other people, this question had to be serious. I had to know - who do believers say Jesus is?

I went up close, close as you can formally get; for the first time in my twenties I read the four gospels, then again the ampler work of *The Urantia Book* on who Jesus was.

Well, he was stupendous! As a Jew, I fancied to recognise his slant, his delivery's style, the significance and clout of it, his whole elan. I had a snug little laugh in me at the time that went, 'What a Jew - Jesus was such a Jew, - only a Jew could really get him' I hugged such vain notions to myself.

Whatever, you just had to like the man from what *The Urantia Book* said of the man' the sheer guts, the clean nerve, the bull's eye truth of what he said. He spoke, and bliss flamed from his word. He opened his mouth, and beatitude came out of it. According to both *The Urantia Book* and the gospels he came out of those Capernaum hills and turned himself into word and deed. A man of huge presence, when he spoke of God from inside of himself, his speaking like a breathing, like fish swimming, or a bird taking to the air. A free, tough, unpossessive man, thousands followed him, I suppose because of the power of independence - he needed nothing, no shelter, approval, opinion, not even his life, from anyone.

He was man integral, total, intact, and when he looked at you with that truth in his eye, even if you had messed your life up, you just got better, or you would see, or stand up and walk.

He went walking up and down the land and people, thousands of them, would want to see him. They would

cross deserts, climb trees, go through a roof or jump into the sea, just to touch him, be changed forever, and live. People saw God's spirit in him, he, so present to God's spirit himself, that some thought he was like God, others, that he was God, - if God could ever be in a human

As for those pests of Judaism, the priests of the temple, well, could Jesus "nuke" them, or what! He sure put paid to their loathsome system. He died for not being the power-messiah to confirm their love affair with themselves as God's chosen.

Fine, fine. This was Jesus. Perhaps like quite a few Jews, I thought Jesus great; but, no matter what he said and he did say it, he was not God's son.

I had to go into the logic of this. My denying that Jesus was what he said had a two-pronged consequence.

The first was the fact of Jesus as Christ in other people's lives. This was the logic of denying it; if Jesus was not what he said, then a huge sector of humanity was having a mass- hallucination. Millions of good-desiring human beings had deceived themselves. Or they were the dupes of a deception of planetary extent. My refusing credence to Jesus being God's Son meant that those millions and millions who gave it were in error about the objective reality of their subjective convictions.

How do you bite on the bullet of a conclusion like that? You'd have to be a mega-pervert to like the look of this sum.

Rather than flinch it away, like I wanted to, I had to get closer to what Jesus was for others. You had to take that inner look. Over years of looking this is what I found.

"Jesus" was a name at whose utterance the greatest amount of good came to people's hearts. The "Jesus" concept seemed to undersell out the highest ideals of people. In the rendering of Christ artists put their utmost into his imaging in dance, music, word, the visual arts. At the name of Christ people were brought to their own best by it.

Sure, there were some very good people who were not touched by him. I supposed some were left impassive by him, indifferent. But I'd describe these people as

"Despite my (private) version of Christ is as different from *The URANTIA Book's* Christ as can be, somehow, in a way I don't have words for, *The URANTIA Book* is still the source of it.

In the revelator's description of Jesus we get an analytic description of his thought; the reporting of his actions; and the paraphrasing of his sermons and talks via Midwayer expression of the facts. But it may be that this is only a pattern, a stencil.

The Midwayers' picturing of Christ may be requiring you to partner it personally, to bring your own personality to it, latch it on, meld with it.

The Midwayers' account could be a pattern you have to put your own humanity onto. This may have been the revelators' intention. It may be that the reason why *The URANTIA Book* Jesus is just his words and acts is precisely to allow each individual to clothe him with their own spiritual personality."

asleep, neither good or bad, just somnolent to all sorts of crucial things, maybe just dozing a bit before God woke them up.

Then there were those who hated the word “Jesus”, (I knew them, heck, - they were mostly me and my gang), but we had “done” something to ourselves.

Denying the reality of Jesus as Christ also left me at odds with the hero of the gospels. If he was the touchstone of truth, what was I saying by denying he was Christ. That he who did, said, and lived perfection was mistaken about his identify?

That he, who was the epitome of sanity, had made a slip-up about who he was?

That he, who was a paragon of lucidity, was confused about his origins?

Too ridiculous for words, I had to keep on tracking on the harrowing logic-trail of this one.

So, on the trail; If he, the touchstone of truth was mistaken about what he was, how could there be any truth after that? If he wasn't the truth, there was no truth. If he was wrong, there was no right. If there was no truth or right, where was the coherence of anything at all?

Still on the trail, but right down to the fence of it now, about to hit wall, the wall of myself; for my denial to be right meant that all those who believed were cheats or mad, that there was no such thing as truth or reality, no coherence or meaning. Then what was life?

For me to be right I'd have to live in a chaos of no other rule than random power or craziness. But if I was wrong, and Jesus was who he said, I could step back into the human circle, join hands, and not be looking-down at believing humanity like at a bunch of lunatics for the rest of an anyhow meaningless existence. I weighed the odds, lightening quick.

On the next stroke, I believed.

The weird thing was, that stroke wasn't the faith. That was just the second when I said “Yes”. Faith got given to me in the next. For the minute I said “Yes - he is - Jesus is who he says he is-” the whole world went “click!” and snapped into place. But it was me who had to say “Yes” first.

When I was younger, surer and strong, I came to God through myself; not so young or confident any more, I came to Jesus through believing in the reality of other people. As for *The Urantia Book*, it stood right up in me, and sang.

I had made a decision. There has to come a stopping-point for the mind when evidence requirement is exhausted. A time when the demand for “proof” yields to another faculty of faith. I made the decision, not to give up the honourable mind-search, but to exercise with it the faculty of faith.

So I had faith in Christ Jesus.

## **Bouquet**

**by Steve Shinall, USA**

**Gather children yourselves  
like flowers, form a garden  
of innocence.**

**Study the sun and all  
its sharing, give of yourself  
and you shall be rich.**

**Blow the dust of conformity  
off your ideas, sketch your  
theories, paint your words!  
The canvas of the universe  
is stretched before you  
in a rainbow of worlds  
in colors unheard.**

**Fear not the darkness  
of despair, when life's  
autumn to a closing  
has come, for the  
candle of Truth  
waxing wisdom shall  
melt upon your soul  
like a setting sun.**

**Gather children yourselves  
like clouds, rain prophecies  
upon the land.**

**A puddle of dreams shall have  
a nightmare's ripple, and the  
fear of hell remain in the  
minds of Man.**