

THE ARENA

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THE MIND ARENA OF CHOICE

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

ILLUMINATING URANTIA, GENTLY.

Our stories about "how the Urantia Book found me" are always entertaining. Some are so surprising that we have to assume the midwayers and seraphim worked overtime, helping to bump us along our personal paths to truth. But are we always to depend upon these unseen and celestial helpers to foster the dissemination of the teachings of the revelation they sponsored? How responsible, and trustworthy, are we?

We first generations of readers are setting up study groups and worldwide organizations assuming we have a responsibility to assist with the gentle illumination of our world. But each of us has walked a unique path. We each are driven by our own set of motivations to accept, to understand, and to foster this revelation. Thus for us to agree upon goals and methods is not a simple matter.

To help us consider the opportunities and complications involved with disseminating truth, starting on page 5 we reprint an article written by Jeffrey Wattles. Like the Urantia Papers, this article is long and dense, and like the Papers, its quality and content make it a joy to explore. But before embarking upon such a study, it pays to warm up! So let's start with a few thoughts from recent email discussion. Greg MacIsaac wrote:

"If we really want to reach people and effectively introduce them to the LIB, we need to learn how to make them yearn for the revelation prior to introducing them to it. I have noticed that when people are ready and seeking answers, inevitably the LIB finds them if they keep looking long enough. We can go around sowing seeds, and some will likely grow; but a wiser farmer would fertilize and prepare the soil first, before planting the seed."

To help illustrate Greg's idea about the value of preliminary fertilization, Dorothy Elder related the following story to our worldwide ILIA email list:

"During a UBIS study course that I was facilitating not long ago, one of the students, an engineer for a US petroleum company, was participating in the class while he was overseeing a project in the United Arab Emirates. This reader, (I'll call him John), was on top of an oil derrick overlooking the Persian Gulf. He was observing safety procedures, and when he spotted a man not wearing his safety hat he reminded him to follow company procedures

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to always keep the hard-hat on. The man responded that he wasn't too concerned with such cautionary measures because Allah was the only one he had to fear, and if Allah was angry with him and chose to punish him it wouldn't make much difference if he was wearing a hard-hat, or not. John saw that the man spoke sincerely in making this comment, and he paused to engage him in conversation.

John began by asking Hamid about his family, and the man's countenance radiated joy as he talked about his much-loved three sons. John also inquired about Hamid's parents, and he learned that the parents had reared him in a loving environment and had watched over him wisely as a child and youth. The conversation centered around the father-son relationship, and soon John asked if it wasn't reasonable that, if Hamid, a mere man, could find it so easy and natural to love his sons and carefully rear them, would not Allah, as the infinite upholder of a universe, have even a bigger and greater love for all his children? Would not Allah, capable of such love and possessing infinite wisdom, want his children to take care of themselves wisely, the same way he, Hamid, raised and watched over his own sons? Would not Allah's attitude towards him be one of the love of a father?

This conversation continued for well over an hour as Hamid was filled with enthusiasm upon contemplating an enlarged and illuminating concept of Allah as a universal, loving Father. He said, 'This makes better sense to me! I will henceforth believe in a loving Father-Allah, not an Allah I must fear. And I will teach this lesson to my sons, just as you have taught it to me.' "

An exhilarating outcome, arising from a mutual respect between two men, and the love of a father for his children.

2006 IUA Conference

The ANZURA Governing Board and the 2006 IUA Conference Committee continue with the planning of the International Conference that will be held 14 to 18 July next year in Sydney. We are hoping to get a good turn out of Aussies and Kiwis to support this once in a life time opportunity to host an international conference for students of *The Urantia Book*.

So far the committee has held two face-to-face meetings; the most recent one involved a visit to The Women's College at Sydney Uni which will be the venue for the conference. This was the first time the majority of committee members viewed the venue and everyone came away satisfied that this will make an excellent venue for a winter conference.

The next face-to-face meeting will be in September and we will be expanding the committee to include others who agree to assist with the organisation and management of the many logistical issues that need to be considered to insure all aspects of the conference run smoothly. We also plan to hold ANZURA's AGM for 2005 over this weekend in September so all ANZURA members are welcome. (See more details on the AGM further on).

Our in-house graphic designer and illustrious ANZURA President, Vern Verass has designed a wonderful registration booklet that gives all the information on the conference with a pull-out registration form. He has made it possible for us to give the conference a dignified professional look without it costing us an arm and a leg. Thank you, Vern.

Full details of the program, venue, the registration booklet, and other logistical considerations can be found on the website at www.urantia.org.au/anzuraiIUAconference2006. If you register before 30 November you will get a discount so make sure you register early.

ANZURA AGM 24 September 2005

Normally ANZURA's Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are held during our annual conferences but as we are not having a conference this year given our preoccupation with next year's major event, the Governing Board has decided to hold the 2005 AGM at the next face-to-face conference planning meeting on 24 September in Sydney. All ANZURA members are invited to attend the AGM and also to participate in the planning sessions for the conference.

This will be a great excuse to get together over a Spring weekend in Sydney and to have an opportunity to get involved in next year's conference planning. Who knows, you might even feel inspired to volunteer for one of the many jobs our Conference Committee Chair, Ivierindi will be hustling you for.

Il Libro di Urantia

Saskia Raevouri

Over the last six months it has been my pleasure—and privilege—to work with Urantia Foundation to help prepare the Italian translation for publication. This is the culmination of a two-decades-long labor of love for the Italian translation team, headed by Guglielmo (Memo) Zago and supervised by Trustee Seppo Kanerva.

Now that *IL LIBRO DI f/RANT/A* is formatted and ready for the printer, approximately \$40,000 will be needed for the initial print run. Jane Ploetz, my good friend and an Associate Trustee of Urantia Foundation, has set up a special bank account, Urantia Book Translation Fund (independent of Urantia Foundation) to receive contributions.

These funds are being handled exclusively by Jane and monitored by both of us until we have raised our goal of \$40,000, at which time we will hand the money over to Urantia Foundation. We have opened our account with a \$100 donation, so we still need \$39,900! We plan to give daily updates as we watch the total grow.

Sixty million people speak Italian, mostly in Italy, San Marino and Switzerland, and there are about one million native Italian speakers in the United States. With its large Roman Catholic population, Italy is undoubtedly full of seekers looking for an expanded revelation of Jesus as

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well as the amplified Bible concepts that the revelation offers. The Italian-speaking world could be just as ripe for the revelation as the Spanish, and we can all help to make it happen for them!

Won't you please give whatever you can? No gift is too small. Both large and small amounts are needed for the success of the revelation in Italy.

Update: 19 July, 2005

Incredible news for the Italian translation printing fund! A devoted Urantia couple has pledged \$15,000! Wowee! This brings us to \$38,985.01 and leaves us with just a little over a thousand dollars to raise to make our goal of \$40,000! On behalf of the entire translation team, I say THANK YOU to the generous givers!

Update: 26 July, 2005

Since my last announcement we have received another \$539.99, bringing us to \$40,056 = and OVER THE TOP to our goal of \$40,000 for the printing of the Italian translation of the Urantia Book!

Editor's note: A little focused and timely enthusiasm, and financial mountains become mole hills. It has been refreshing and exciting to watch Saskia and her crew orchestrate the manifestation of wealth from thin air... Many thanks and congratulations to all concerned!

Footprints rewrite history of first Americans

NewScientist, July 2005, Robert Adler

Human footprints discovered beside an ancient Mexican lake have been dated to 40,000 years ago. If the finding survives the controversy it is bound to stir up, it means that humans must have moved into the New World at least 30,000 years earlier than previously thought.

"If true, this would completely change our view of how and when the Americas were first colonised," says Chris Stringer, head of human origins at the Natural History Museum in London, UK. But like several US experts, he is reserving judgement until the dates can be independently confirmed.

The discovery was made by an international team led by Silvia Gonzalez, a geoarchaeologist at Liverpool John Moores University in the UK. She found the fossilised footprints in 2003 in a quarry near the city of Puebla, 100 kilometres southeast of Mexico City. "I walked 1 metre and started to see them," Gonzalez says. "It felt like a thunderbolt."

In just two days, Gonzalez and her colleagues found hundreds of human and animal footprints preserved in a layer of ash from a nearby volcano. The footprints were made along the shore of a lake and were submerged after the water level rose, preserving them under sediments.

"They are unmistakably human footprints," says team member Matthew Bennett at Bournemouth University in the UK. "They meet all the criteria that were set up after the Laetoli prints were found [in Tanzania in 1976]." The sizes suggests that about one-third of them were made by children.

Sand and shells

But when were they made? It has taken the team two years, using a panoply of high-tech dating techniques, to determine that the prints are about 40,000 years old.

The key date came from shells in the lake sediments, which the team carbon-dated to 38,000 years ago. Sand grains baked into the ash and dated using optically stimulated luminescence corroborated the finding.

The researchers also used argon-argon, uranium series and electron spin resonance techniques to date the layers. "The footprints are clearly older than 38,000 years," says team member Tom Higham of the carbon-dating lab at the University of Oxford, US.

The conventional view is that humans arrived in the Americas via Beringia around 1,000 years ago, when a land bridge became available between Siberia and Alaska. There have been claims about earlier waves of settlers, who must have made the crossing over water, based mainly on sites with signs of habitation dated up to 40,000 years ago, but these claims have drawn intense criticism.

"Accurate and reproducible"

Gonzalez and her team expect the same. This will be incredibly controversial, there's no doubt about that," Higham says. They invite other researchers to scrutinise their findings, due to be published in the journal *Quaternary Science Review*.

"We have done a year of solid work to make sure it's accurate and reproducible," Higham stresses,

How people got to Mexico 40 millennia ago is a matter for speculation. Bennett suspects that they migrated along the Pacific coasts of Asia and North America. But when it comes to the dares and footprints, he says, "those are not speculation at all".

The footprints remain where they were found. The team has used laser scans and rapid prototyping equipment to create highly accurate three-dimensional copies, accurate to a fraction of a millimetre, which can be viewed at the Royal Society's Summer Exhibition in London, UK, which ends on 7 July.

***You may enter the kingdom as a child,
but the Father requires that you grow
up, by grace, to the full stature of
spiritual adulthood***

The Urantia Book, page 2054

Secondary Works

Benet Rutenberg, USA

Several years ago, well before the loss of the English copyright, Urantia Foundation made public, rules that governed use of quotes and passages from *The Urantia Book*. Though I do not remember all the details, up to 1500 words were permitted without permission. I believe the courtesy of informing Urantia Foundation of intended usage was requested. It may be irrelevant today, but it once was significant.

It seems we are confronted with the conundrum of whether or not we are working with, "He who is not with us is against us," or "He who is not against us is with us." It requires true spirit discernment of intent to resolve, and this discernment need occur with every new situation. On the larger issue there is this sense that there are many more groups or individuals attempting to add or detract from the value and mission of *The Urantia Book* than there probably are. Even if it is more serious than what I think, rushing to get on a bus that is not going the direction we would like to go is not wise. This fear or apprehension that we must beat someone to the punch is unfounded and unsound. It lends itself to an extremely subtle form of hysteria which is not productive or useful. It is the same emotional pathway which decided the fate of Eden.

On that note, I disagree with some that feel we are in the "*second Garden*". That may be an analogy for the English copyright and I am still thinking that one through. It is not for the movement as a whole. The movement which supports the true purpose of this revelation is alive and well within each person who believes it to be true and acts accordingly. Are there individuals and parts of groups who have thought and acted outside of this? Absolutely. Will there come assaults of varying degrees? Yes there will. Are there some who maintain conflicted interest? Yes there are. We may not be able to stop another from acting in a foolish, impatient, conflicted or destructive manner, but we do not have to follow suit. We need to continue our work and stay within ourselves and our mission. We are in the first so-called *Garden* until we abandon the principles and practices that serve to disseminate the teachings in the slow and sure way. It is a great discipline to not demand to see results in one's own lifetime. It requires clarity of mind and truth in purpose to see that we did not default because of the loss of the copyright. The persons who conspired to take the copyright did. The copyright is not what determines default anyway. Abandoning the method and the mission does. If some had left the *Garden* and gone their own way they may have been said to default but the project, as a whole, would not have. Those who decided and led the ones who left may be guilty of more than default but not those who stay and continue the work with a few less laborers.

So the question then becomes, who are we as individuals? What will we choose to do? Will we fulfil the hopes and plans of those who laboured to give us this

revelation, or will we create self-fulfilling prophecies of failure based on impatience and lack of wisdom? This reminds me of how certain people in the middle of the USA behave when they hear a snowstorm is coming. They rush out to buy up extra milk, bread and food because they might run out and sure enough many run out because of the greed and impatience of the fearful. It is the panic that ensures that the problem will happen. In this analogy it is important to remember that acting on our fears may cause us to interfere in the designs of our celestial hosts who are eminently more equipped to see and direct events in the big picture. And since the teachings are not a commodity but a progressively eternal spiritual reality, we are not likely to run out. We can, however, do ourselves the disservice of being reactionary in our current situation without also seeing the bigger and more far-reaching picture. The revelation assures us that these things will sort themselves out in time. But I would like to fix it *now!* The revelators, with their history and vastly superior experience, have said it will take time. In realizing that there are many more steps which need to be taken, I must realize that I possess no way to atone for my lack of complete understanding without *surrendering the need to fix it now.*

THE URANTIA REVELATION is meant for all the world, so how can its teachings be introduced into other cultures without imposing a system of North American values and traditions on people who regard them as foreign? The case of J.J. Benitez and the large following he has drawn in the Spanish-speaking world through his fictional works based on *Urantia Book* concepts may be something we can learn from. The Latino world has been seeded with the Urantia revelation in a way that could never have been done by Anglo-Americans.

Many who have found the teachings through his books had no idea that the revelation originated in the United States of America, in the city of Chicago. They were introduced to it clothed in science fiction in their native tongue, and their curiosity led them to the source of the author's inspiration—El *Intro de Urantia*. For those readers the revelation is not "an American book". Could this be one way the revelators intended the teachings to take root throughout the world?

Although the work of J.J. Benitez is regarded by some English-speaking readers as plagiarism, the fact that Benitez's work has spread so widely the seeds of truth stored in *The Urantia Book*, might be seen as part of the outworking of a larger plan for our planet. What if each culture or nation were to have its own J.J. Benitez, to translate the ideas and concepts of *The Urantia Book* into works that appeal to the masses of intelligent and sincere people, desperate to move beyond their self-acknowledged ignorance and confusion, towards light and a greater life?

Introducing *The Urantia Book* in accord with its teachings

Jeffrey Wattles, September 2003

Recognizing *The Urantia Book* as a wonderful gift, we naturally want to introduce the book to others. The coming of the book is good news, and the book gives the good news of the gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man in a way that is in some respects ideal. We are called to proclaim the gospel to all the world. Shall we therefore do the same with *The Urantia Book*? Some call for aggressive promotion of the book, while others adhere to the tradition of a quiet and gradual approach. Can we find guidance from the book to resolve the debate?

There are three possible ways to use the book on controversial questions.

1. The one-sided warrior combs the book for quotations that can be taken out of context to support a particular ideology.
2. The pluralistic pacifist, reacting against the ugliness of the battle of the one-sided warriors, draws the sophistic conclusion that since "each side" can fabricate proof for its own position, the result is a draw, and anyone should feel free to opt for any policy in good conscience, safe in the belief that the book itself does not lean one way or the other. The pacifist looks down with condescension on the entire debate and appeals to loving tolerance as a substitute for sustained inquiry.
3. The seasoned scholar attempts to discern a guiding framework by reflecting on key passages in the light of a coordinated study of the book as a whole. The book thus does not leave us at sea without a star chart.

Though passages may be used to support opposing policies, a few clear distinctions unlock a coherent interpretation. Clarity dawns if we distinguish goals from methods, the book from its teachings, and exclusively spiritual revelations (to be proclaimed to all the world) from spiritual-and-cultural revelations (which spread in a gradual, evolutionary way). The book contains and implies many lessons that delineate a ballpark. No one will be perfectly accurate in calling foul balls. Some naturally hit to right field and some to left field. But some ideas are not even in the ballpark.

The main word of wisdom on this topic has been stated by Jesus:

When you enter the kingdom, you are reborn. You cannot teach the deep things of the spirit to those who have been born only of the flesh; first see that men are born of the spirit before you seek to instruct them in the advanced ways of the spirit. Do not undertake to show men the beauties of the temple until you have first taken them into the temple. (1592.6)

Even this wisdom, however, does not completely instruct those who share the book today, and we need

further study to gain the balance that we see in the Master's life.

Sharing truth is a normal part of personality relationships (31.6). It is also a sacred trust; Solitary Messengers regard the assignment to reveal truth as "the highest trust of their order" (260.2). And, as we know from experience, no matter how much we labor in "natural, ordinary, difficult, and trying methods," sharing truth is *a* delight (1521.2). For those who aspire to "walk in the clear light of living truth" and who would heed the principles of prayer before "surrender[ing] every wish of mind and every craving of soul" in quest of divine guidance, we should have been industrious, and this includes making a thorough study of the book itself for what guidance it offers (1571.5; 1002#9).

This essay includes many references for study and discussion. This essay is, in a way, like a musical score, a condensed version of the symphony of wisdom that awaits the student who returns to the texture of the revelation itself. A study group years ago went through an earlier version of this essay. Initially they disagreed with these conclusions, but weeks of study and discussion convinced them otherwise. Because the present generation of readers seems, *on average*, hasty in sharing the book and tardy in sharing selected teachings—and since this is an essay on sharing the book—this essay places greater emphasis on the theme of gradual, evolutionary growth. It is my prayer that readers of differing views can sustain spiritual unity while considering this sometimes contentious issue. This essay will be in vain, however, if those who cherish the book's wisdom use it as a rationale for fear, elitism, inaction, and failure to adapt lessons from earlier times to changing present circumstances.

Obviously *The Urantia Book* does not give precise policy details for any one generation of readers. It would betray the creative tensions deliberately introduced into the book itself to pretend to summarize everything too easily. Since the guidance from the book on this topic is largely indirect, since the historical situation continues to develop, and since individuals find themselves at times in exceptional circumstances, it would be unreasonable to pretend to derive an inflexible and dogmatic policy. Let me emphasize that the interpretations and conclusions offered here are mine alone and represent no official position whatsoever.

1. Gathering perspectives from a review of Parts 1- IV

The perspective of Part I transcends the specific sequence of planetary epochs. It announces a process underway which began long ago and whose fulfillment is countless generations into the future.

The revelation of the truth about God is appearing, and the human race is destined to know the Universal Father in all that beauty of loveliness of attributes

so magnificently portrayed by the Creator Son who sojourned on Urantia as the Son of Man and the Son of God (60.6)

Among the many principles of sharing truth expressed in Part I, we note that those charged with the task of revealing universe truth are genuinely qualified for their work. They do not overreveal, and they give preference "to the highest existing human concepts" in their efforts to reach the human mind (3301; 144#1; 207#1; 16.7; cf. 17.1; 1343).

Part II sets forth the normal pattern of evolution in which a planet receives a sequence of epochal revelations (576#5 and Paper 52). In "Urantia's Postbestowai Age" (597#6), Part II's most direct and relevant discussion of our topic, the author avoids any definite reference to The Urantia Papers themselves. Instead, after noting the importance of religious revelation, the author simply says that Jesus has shown the way, and goes on to call for various "personal transformations and planetary adjustments"—social fraternity, intellectual cross-fertilization, ethical awakening, political wisdom, and spiritual insight.

Part III helps us to distinguish wise, evolutionary methods from revolutionary methods by telling the stories of the successes and failures of the first three epochal revelations. At times the authors give general statements that are *directly applicable* today, while they more often present instructive narratives which we must *judiciously adapt* to present problems. Why are we given such detail about previous epochal revelations? If the purpose were merely to explain *why* the planet is in its present condition, less detail would be needed. It rather seems that we have an opportunity to gain wisdom by understanding past successes and failures, described in terms that invite judicious application by readers of the book. Except for occasional universal statements, such as the warning against short cuts (846.4), most comments on epochal revelation management are tied to the particular revelation in question and can only be extended with discrimination to a discussion about policies for sharing *The Urantia Book*,

The first epochal revelation ministered to the full range of human needs—spiritual, intellectual, and material. The Planetary Prince's staff had an early phase of gathering their associates, organizing their headquarters, and establishing their ten councils for service (575#4; 749#6). They enjoyed 300,000 years of success by following the classic policy of evolutionary revelation:

None of the Prince's staff would present revelation to complicate evolution; they presented revelation only as the climax of their exhaustion of the forces of evolution. (747.4; cf. 1002.8)

"Sometimes error is so great that its rectification by revelation would be fatal to those slowly emerging truths which are essential to its experiential overthrow" (554-55). Though word of the arrival of the Prince's staff spread

slowly, very significant changes occurred under their influence (743.10). However, the college of revealed religion was especially slow in functioning (747.3-6). Their first step was to go forth proclaiming a bold gospel of personal initiative to challenge the tradition-bound tribes of the day (749.4; 767.4).

There is a successful way to present spiritual truth within the context of a spiritual-and-cultural revelation, and Hap's college of revealed religion is our classical example. His teaching was thoroughly integrated with the program of the entire staff (743.4; 747.4-7; 748.7). In other words, the college of revealed religion did not go out proclaiming their message ahead of the rest. You were not ready to meet Hap and his associates until you were ready to meet all the other councils of the Prince's staff. The analogy for today—to whatever extent one wants to shape policy on the model of the First Epochal Revelation—is this: that one does not go forth advertising e.g., Part IV in ways that would be unwise regarding the other parts of the book,

Describing policies of gradualism in 749#6, the author notes—with the aid of a twentieth-century **example**—"the confusion and dismay which always result as a result of overteaching and overenlightenment." One of their cardinal methods of "slowly and naturally" advancing their goals was that the Prince's corporeal staff continuously gathered about them the superior individuals of the surrounding tribes and, after training and inspiring these students, sent them back as teachers and leaders of their respective peoples" (743.9). Their epochal revelation collapsed when some of them let pride and false freedom overturn the plan they had been given.

The second epochal revelation was also a ministry to the full range of planetary needs. An Adamic bestowal typically moves through two major phases, from limited contact with the planetary population to full interaction (585.6). However, although their training had given our Adam and Even "a full realization of the folly of attempting to achieve planetary advancement independently of the divine plan of progression" (830.6), progress was so slow and their situation seemed so desperate, that they became impatient to see some immediate results, and so they fell victim to "the insidious propaganda of personal liberty and planetary freedom of action" (840.2; 846.3). The lesson is sobering and universal, and it pertains to personal growth as well as to epochal revelation management. **"Never, in all your ascent to Paradise, will you gain anything by impatiently attempting to circumvent the established and divine plan by short cuts, personal inventions, or other devices for improving on the way of perfection, to perfection, and for eternal perfection"** (846.4). One of the most important lessons of the default is that the Luciferian sophistries of personal liberty and planetary freedom of action can infect even those who believe in the Universal Father and are working for a high planetary destiny.

The third epochal revelation was of a new type—an exclusively spiritual mission.

Like Jesus. Melchizedek attended strictly to the fulfillment of the mission of his bestowal. He did not attempt to reform the mores, to change the habits of the world. nor to promulgate even advanced sanitary practices or scientific truths. He came to achieve two tasks; to keep alive on earth the truth of the one God and to prepare the way for the subsequent mortal bestowal of a Paradise Son of that Universal Father. 0018.4)

Please note that the comparison of Melchizedek with Jesus establishes a type of revelation in contrast with the earlier type. Melchizedek's mission, however, also went through phases, nor moving into high gear until after winning over Abraham.

Part IV tells of another exclusively spiritual epochal revelation, the life and teachings of Jesus. Jesus' strategy and tactics were neither impulsive or compulsive, since his spontaneity was grounded in decisions made in the light of thorough reflection. As an adolescent, he painstakingly thought through the forest of problems associated with his mission (1389#3). Later, after fully consecrating himself and formally beginning his public career, he took forty days in the wilderness to formulate the great decisions that would be his policies of epochal revelation management. He began by thinking over "the whole span of human life on Urantia, from the days of Andon and Fonta, down through Adam's default, and on to the ministry of the Melchizedek of Salem" (1514.6). The leading theme of these decisions was his carefully articulated resolve not to use the full revelatory powers at his disposal; in addition, he would rigorously avoid compromise with evil and would subordinate his inclinations on all other matters to the Father's will (1516-23). Jesus was "always torn in his human heart" between his strong desire to win the world and the Father's way (1515.1-2). Refusing false generosity and the cheap thrill of fascinating people with an overdose of revelation, Jesus chose "natural, ordinary, difficult, and trying methods" (1521.1). Once provisioned with such superbly clarified policy decisions, he could wholeheartedly go forth as the master teacher he was—focused, responsive, positive, free, vivid, and trusting. In these early days of the fifth epochal revelation, it is well for students to do likewise—to take the time required for patient problem-solving, for a thorough review of planetary history, and for careful policy-making.

Jesus' public career unfolded in an unforced rhythm of phases, with different reasons for the activities and corresponding restraints appropriate at each step. In the first phase, Jesus made every effort to salvage the pre-existing religion—quietly and gradually to take over the work of John the Baptist (1626.2), before a phase of more aggressive, public work, oriented primarily, but not exclusively, to the Jews, with persistent efforts to win over the religious leaders. Until the last phase of his earth career,

the epochal fact of Jesus' combined nature was concealed. In seeking instructive analogies between Jesus' ministry and the outworking of the fifth epochal revelation, recall that Jesus' earth career stretches over a few decades, while that of *The Urantia Book* is projected for a thousand years (330.2).

As a consequence of the specific nature of his project, and in accord with Immanuel's instructions (1329.5), Jesus excluded certain topics from public discussion,

He cautioned his apostles to be discreet in their remarks concerning the strained relations then existing between the Jewish people and the Roman government; he forbade them to become in any way embroiled in these difficulties. He was always care full to avoid the political snares of his enemies, ever making reply, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to God the things which are Gods." He refused to have his attention diverted from his mission of establishing a new way of salvation: he would nor permit himself to be concerned about anything else. in his personal life he was always duly observant of all civil laws and regulations: in all his public teachings he ignored the civic, social, and economic realms. He told the three apostles that he was concerned only with the principles of man's inner and personal spiritual life. (1580.4)

Jesus, as previously noted, also imposed a second sort of restraint on his gospel messengers, based on his knowledge of the psychological laws of spiritual growth: we should not give advanced teaching to those not yet born of the spirit (1592.6).

We can infer from Jesus* strategy the principle **to act so as to avoid or delay an epochal confrontation** until it is unavoidable and imminent. Look how **the** youthful Jesus handled the shock of witnessing the Jerusalem temple scene for the first time. He repeatedly retired for meditation; he engaged the religious teachers in questions that imparted teachings, but he remained free of any attempt to win victories (1377ff). Note that after Jesus' public career was underway, even the opposition in Jerusalem (1605.3) and the Nazareth rejection (1686) did not justify the change of tactics of Jesus' epochal sermon (1709). Only the organized opposition of the religious leaders indicated to him that the time of open warfare had arrived (1708.2). Again, to delay epochal confrontation does not mean to avoid all controversy. Rather the wise teacher proclaims just that truth with the greatest leverage for people's growth at that time.

The two concluding Papers of Part IV review history since Pentecost and provide an invigorating and balancing conclusion for Part IV and for the book as a whole. They also say several things, to which we will turn presently, that directly address our present question.

H. Principles of method

1. Be patient.

Attitude is the foundation of method. Is an attitude of

patience one extreme along a spectrum of reasonable attitudes, or could patience possibly be the very golden mean itself? A passage in Part II describing the Quickeners of Morality presents patience as the mean between stagnation and overrapid growth. Impatience, we recall, is "a spirit poison" (557.4). True patience is not passivity. It is an active attitude infused with enthusiasm for the cosmic rhythms in which we participate as we farsightedly actualize destiny (1295.6). Patience is compatible with properly focused aggressive action.

2. Distinguish goals from methods.

We can be enthusiastic about goals while heeding wisdom about methods. The papers contain many clarion calls alerting the reader to goals. For example, at the close of Paper 94, Melchizedek Teachings in the Orient, the author speaks about twentieth-century Buddhism and asks how it will respond to "the presentation of new concepts of God and the Absolute" (possibly by those who carry the teachings as well as by the book itself).

All Urantia is waiting for the proclamation of the ennobling message of Michael. unencumbered by the accumulated doctrines and dogmas of nineteen centuries of contact with the religions of evolutionary origin. The hour is striking for presenting to Buddhism, to Christianity, to Hinduism, even to the peoples of all faiths, not the gospel about Jesus, but the living, spiritual reality of the gospel of Jesus. (1041.5)

And there are other clarion calls signaling urgent planetary needs for truth. The traditional religious records are "untrustworthy as guides for religious living or as the source of true information about the Universal Father" (59.7). Moreover, "revelation is the only technique for atoning for this deficiency in the conceptual data which man so urgently needs in order to construct a logical philosophy of the universe and to arrive at a satisfying understanding of his sure and settled place in that universe" (1137.3). Moreover we live in turbulent times; "And such times of great testing and threatened defeat are always times of great revelation" (2082.9).

If we take these statements of goals out of context of the book as a whole, they might seem to justify revolutionary policies of sharing *The Urantia Book*. Or we might feel that they stand in tension with other statements in the book which talk about wise, evolutionary progress. But so long as we distinguish enthusiasm about goals from wisdom about methods, we can be inspired by these statements without becoming confused. Our concern about methods should channel, not block, our enthusiasm.

3. Give advanced spiritual teachings only to those who already know God.

The clearest and simplest principle, quoted earlier, is this one of Jesus.

When you enter the kingdom you are reborn. You cannot reach the deep things of the spirit to those who

have been born only of the flesh; first see that men are born of the spirit before you seek to instruct them in the advanced ways of the spirit. Do not undertake to show men the beauties of the temple until you have first taken them into the temple" (1592.7-1593.4)

Jesus presented this requirement without qualification, not as a lofty ideal to be gradually approached, nor as a high standard for apostles as distinct from disciples. Row then shall advanced truths be promulgated? Jesus wanted his messengers to learn to live the truth, so that people would then seek after them for additional teachings (1726.3; 1592.4; cf. 507.4; 2084.1). Today we tend to regard that ideal as unrealistic. Or are we the ones who are unrealistic? There is such wisdom about the laws of growth and the ways of teaching imbedded in this teaching that it is worth considerable inquiry. Melchizedek followed the same policy, presenting advanced teachings only to those who could handle them (1916-17). *The Urantia Book* presents the beauties of the temple. So we should present the book only to those whom we know to be **born of the spirit**.

Despite its importance, even this teaching is not an absolute guide for us today. If we were to apply it mindlessly, we would cease discussing the book on websites or placing it in bookstores and libraries (though presumably the purpose of making the book publicly available is not to grab the attention of passers-by, but to enable those who are receptive to find it). Nevertheless, Jesus' principle greatly guides our quest for wisdom as we design projects and policies,

4. Living interaction normally precedes presenting the whole revelation.

It is clear that revelation is to come partly by the lives we live: "The world needs to see Jesus living again on earth in the experience of spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master to all men" (2084.1). Of course the book itself is to play an important role. "The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present-day professed followers" (2086.2). "What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!" (2090.3) It is a lot easier to hand someone a book than to impart the gospel, and a higher achievement still to love someone in a way that incorporates the gospel and the book in due season.

5. It is perfectly legitimate to present the teachings of an epochal revelation without disclosing the epochal fact.

If the only tool you have is a hammer, you'll treat everything as if it were a nail. If we make *The Urantia Book* mandatory in our ministry, we fall into this elementary blunder. It would destroy sagacity and good

taste to feel honor-bound to reveal your source *every* time you mention a truth that you found in *The Urantia Book*. This is not to deny the book can achieve results that human efforts cannot. The practice of presenting revealed teachings without mentioning the fact of epochal revelation is sometimes called "bootlegging", connoting something devious. Nevertheless the previous two epochal revelations did precisely that. Melchizedek did not initially announce the epochal fact—that *he* was superhuman—and he departed when he began to be regarded with superstitious awe. He did not overreach, but presented what the listener was capable of receiving and assimilating (1016.6-8) (note the high marks given to Ikhnaton and Moses for judiciously adjusting high teachings to the receptivity level of their hearers [1047.6; 1056#4]). When the epochal fact was prematurely announced by Anna and Simeon (1353), the baby Jesus was murderously pursued (1353#10). Notice how Jesus managed his epochal revelation for most of his career. He prepared the teachers in Rome for a message that would come to them only later. He often taught without disclosing the fuller package and greatly delayed announcing his divine Sonship, and he insisted that the gospel not be upstaged by the epochal fact (1670.5; 2052.4.) **Why did Melchizedek and Jesus defer mentioning the epochal fact? They knew that attention would focus less on the main message than on the fascinating, extraordinary source.** When the proper sequence of gospel truth and advanced teachings was inverted, the religion of Jesus was turned into a religion about Jesus (2086.1). It could happen again with this book, just as unconsciously, and with intentions just as good.

In most situations, it is wise to disseminate the teachings of *The Urantia Book* without mentioning the book itself. As a scholar writing for publication, I cite *The Urantia Book* in a footnote as required by integrity and professional ethics. I recall, however, that years after publishing an article in which I cited a major debt to *The Urantia Book*, I was asked by a fellow scholar who read it about my interest in the book. In his mind, my connection with the book upstaged what I had to say. Therefore, I often try to write with enough originality and enough engagement in current discussions so as not to need to cite the book as a major source. The issue calls for good judgment, and I continue to seek it in particular cases.

Some people object to presenting the teachings of *The Urantia Book* without presenting the book itself because it seems somehow secretive, and many people feel uncomfortable about that. In each Part of the book, however, the authors speak with respect of certain kinds of secrets. In evaluating the ethics of omitting or delaying giving certain information the following points may be considered. There are secrets for various reasons (144#1; 207#1). The information may be incomprehensible (for the time being or forever) (79.1; 144.4; 145.1; 219.3); there may be a violation of personal intimacy (208.4; 208.5) or of reverence (603.3). The information may be irrelevant to someone's work (144.6; 147.5; 149.6; 350.6) or even harmful to someone's work—it might "confuse

and handicap" the person (145.1; 148.5; 149.6) or stifle the imagination (330.2).

As Jesus grew, he disclosed less information about himself (1391.4-5). He dissociated the phases of his career (1423,5-8). He restrained talk of the voice at his baptism (1545.4). He restrained public preaching during the early phase of kingdom work (1538.3). He forbade denunciations of Caesar or his servants and told the apostles to stay out of political, social, and economic tangles (1542.5; 1580-81). He tried to keep his healings quiet. He presented his teachings in parables, partly as a defensive measure to confuse superficial hearers (1749.4). He gave special teaching to those (e.g., Nathaniel) who were ready for it and who promised not to share it with others (1767.4). He restricted some meetings for counsel and planning to those who were tried and tested disciples (17 37.4). Note further his selective answering of questions in his trial (1979.3; 1982.7,9; 1983c; 1984.2; 1986.3; 1990d; 1992.5; 1996.1). And note the contrast between the Master's discretion and the evasion of Peter's denial. Jesus recommended that our real prayers be in secret (1640.2). We are cautioned not to waste our time trying to unravel the mysteries of his incarnation (1317.2) and exarnation (2021,4-9).

What shall we conclude? At the very *least*, we need not be haunted by guilt if, in many a situation, we do not disclose our reliance on *The Urantia Book*, but rather simply tend to others' immediate needs.

6. Spiritual-and-cultural revelations spread gradually.

One may classify epochal revelations in terms of the types of project they promote—or avoid promoting. *The first type of epochal revelation is a spiritual-and-cultural revelation.* Such a revelation includes spiritual teaching and also addresses social, economic, and political matters. The Planetary Prince's staff had a college of revealed religion with a gospel to proclaim; and they also taught how to irrigate fields, trap ferocious beasts, select marriage partners, improve tribal governments, etc. Adam and Eve taught the basics of religion and conducted worship; and they also set up a school system, worked for racial uplift, and promoted cultural progress. *The second type of epochal revelation, exemplified by Melchizedek and Jesus, is a specifically spiritual revelation.* The second type does not set forth or engage in cultural uplift projects.

Roughly speaking, each type of revelation has its proper velocity of propagation. A Mack truck is not a Ferrari. The motto of specifically spiritual revelation is, "Proclaim this gospel aggressively to all the world." More people are receptive to the simple gospel than to spiritual-arid-cultural revelation, and responding to a gospel message entails fewer changes for the recipient (9 11.5). The motto of spiritual-and-cultural revelation is "gradual and solid growth."

Failure to heed instructions and blindness to patterns and principles doesn't work. You can't drive a Mack truck like a Ferrari, at least not for long. If you drive it around a

curve too fast, it tips over. Disaster has followed when spiritual-and-cultural revelations tried to go artificially fast and when specifically spiritual revelations became entangled in social and cultural reforms. After leaders of the first epochal revelation shifted into high gear, the enterprise came to a halt within fifty years (758#5). After Adam and Eve defaulted, Plan A was lost, and they had to improvise Plan B (843#5). Specifically spiritual revelations have had analogous problems. The Salem gospel was progressing well in Mesopotamia until the leader decided to attack a practice associated with the local cult (043.1-4). Christianity has suffered from mixing religion with other concerns (2069.3; 2086.6; 1087.4-5). Past carriers of epochal revelation who violated their instructions could hardly have predicted the consequences. If someone had warned them accurately of what lurked beyond their proposals, he or she would have been laughed out of their company as a fear-monger. But the lesson from the Adamic default is sobering: even those who believe in the Universal Father and labor toward a high planetary destiny can take the wrong road. What mortal could have imagined the results of that one decision?

How does *The Urantia Book* fit into the preceding classification of types of epochal revelation? Is it a spiritual-and-cultural revelation or a specifically spiritual revelation? Some readers get confused because the book describes both types. However, the fact that *The Urantia Book* includes instructions for the full range of projects puts it in the first category. It presents teachings about spiritual and religious priorities and also about science, eugenics, world government, and other social, economic, and political topics—and it remains important to keep these types of project distinct today, lest religious groups become political parties (1086-89; 2085.5). The fact that *The Urantia Book* is an advanced spiritual-and-cultural revelation implies that the book not be treated as a tool of evangelization; rather the movement of students of *The Urantia Book* should follow the rhythms of solid and sure growth. On the river of truth, the gospel is the ice-breaker; *The Urantia Book* is the cargo ship that follows it.

7. Screening for receptivity and safety is normal in sharing a spiritual-and-cultural revelation.

Epochal revelations are oriented to groups with high average receptivity in order to reach actually receptive *individuals*. The first two epochal revelations sought out superior individuals (575.2; 585.6; 743.10), and analogous factors operated in the third and fourth epochal revelations (1018.7; 1344.2). Jesus gave advanced teachings to selected individuals (1456; 1767.4).

We would like to introduce the revelation to those who are receptive and avoid those who might harm it. Thus some screening of prospects for epochal revelation is appropriate. This is a hard topic, but we all use an intuitive sense of what is appropriate to bring up in a given conversation. To put a big log on a little fire just kindled can extinguish the fire, whereas once it is burning brightly,

the big log is just right. There is a danger of elitism and pride in raising the question of who is ready for the book, and we don't want to judge people. Nevertheless, if we want to learn what *The Urantia Book* can teach on this subject, we must consider the topic. Discernment is not judging people, not judging souls. Screening is a matter of being wise as serpents, even as we intend to be harmless as doves.

The screening policies of previous epochal revelations show two basic kinds of screening. The first type is **screening for receptivity**. We who have a complex epochal revelation to share need a complex concept of receptivity. Receptivity to *The Urantia Book* is not the same as the need for new truth or even receptivity to selected ideas from the book. The practices of previous epochal revelations suggest three guidelines for us to consider:

- (a) Seek out superior individuals, prospective teachers and leaders. The Prince's corporeal staff continuously gathered about them the superior individuals of the surrounding tribes and, after training and inspiring these students, sent them back as teachers and leaders of their respective peoples. (743; cf. 575.2)
- (b) Seek out those with marked religious capacity, particularly those with experience in some religion. The evolution of the religious capacity of receptivity in the inhabitants of a world largely determines their rate of spiritual advancement and the extent of religious revelation (591.3). "The characteristic difference between evolved and revealed religion is a new quality of divine wisdom which is added to purely experiential human wisdom. But it is experience in and with the human religions that develops the capacity for subsequent reception of increased bestowals of divine wisdom and cosmic insight" (1101.5).
- (c) Seek out those whose who are mentally flexible and whose ideas already agree substantially with those of *The Urantia Book*. "But it is only foolish to attempt the too sudden acceleration of religious growth. A race or nation can only assimilate from any advanced religion that which is reasonably consistent and compatible with its current evolutionary status, plus its genius for adaptation" (1004.8-1005.1). "It is the mission of revelation to sort and censor the successive religions of evolution. But if revelation is to exalt and upstep the religions of evolution, then must such divine visitations portray teachings which are not too far removed from the thought and reactions of the age in which they are presented. Thus must and does revelation always keep in touch with evolution. Always must the religion of revelation be limited by man's capacity of receptivity" (1007.1). Some people are simply not ready yet. Jesus observed of one man that "he must be allowed more time for the trials and difficulties of life to prepare him for the reception of wisdom and higher learning" (1466.2).

For whom is the fifth epochal revelation intended? Another clue is to try to discern from the text itself what beliefs and knowledge seem to be presupposed by the authors. That may indicate to what type of reader it is initially—though not exclusively—directed.

The second type of screening is **screening for safety to the revelation**, "Unarmed observers were freely admitted to Eden for short visits. To sojourn in the Garden a Urantian had to be 'adopted.' He received instructions in the plan and purpose of the Adamic bestowal, signified his intention to adhere to this mission, and then made declaration of loyalty to the social rule of Adam and the spiritual sovereignty of the Universal Father" (835.8). The prohibition against arms of course reminds us that visitors could do harm to the Garden inhabitants. The initial screening here is protective. Recall that Jesus advocated protective screening in the Ordination Sermon: "Present not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample your gems under foot and turn to rend you" (1571.6).

What dangers require screening in our day? Most obviously, we would prefer to avoid bringing the revelation to the notice of those who would become its enemies. Less obviously, it would also be good to screen out revolutionary friends—those whose enthusiasm for the revelation would lack respect for evolution. Revolutionary efforts multiply enemies and precipitate premature conflict.

The Urantia Book takes on the powers of this world. It challenges the nationalism of every nation that regards itself as sovereign, the materialism of every business enterprise that subordinates service to profit, the authority of every religious tradition, and the secularism of any society that tries to live without God. And the response to the book may be proportionate to the book's power, now hardly suspected. Those of us accustomed to centuries of civil liberties may take too much for granted (1302.4). It strains my imagination to think that we readers will never encounter persecution, sometime, somewhere in the world. If and when this becomes inevitable, let us rejoice in sharing the experiences of the prophets before us. But let us not bring down a stormy atmosphere prematurely on others who would otherwise have an opportunity to grow in peace.

The point of this remark is not that we should avoid all controversy. The Planetary Prince's staff, for example, proclaimed "the gospel of individual initiative" within the tradition-bound social groups of that day (749.4). The point is that the most strategic points should be selected whereon controversy is timely.

In practice, how are we to do our screening? We are told that we can never know a person as a result of a single contact (141.3). Moreover, understanding requires knowing the individual's motivation (1098.2). This is a demanding requirement, sometimes too high. In my own experience, there is a qualitative difference between the times when I notice someone who seems "ready" to me, and the times when someone asks a question which is

unwittingly but unmistakably a request for *The Urantia Book*, I actually pray that the person will make such a request as an aid to discerning whether I should introduce *The Urantia Book*. We cannot operate humanely if we take guidelines as absolutes or become anxious about our inability to apply them perfectly. But if we go to the other extreme and refuse to accept the responsibility of discernment, I believe that we let the revelators down.

In sharing truth, some risks are reasonable; some are unreasonable. And those elites who run unreasonable risks do so not just for themselves, but for all of us, and for the fifth epochal revelation. If we do our best in the light of all the instructions we can derive from higher sources, we can truly be content. During this early phase when massive exposure for the book would guarantee nearly universal rejection, if we spend the lion's share of our time on projects that fall clearly within the ballpark indicated by *The Urantia Book* itself, and if we sustain commitments to ethical procedures, we will see a great reduction in energy-consuming organizational controversy and prepare for those anticipated, thrilling planetary developments for which we may be none too ready when the time comes—or which we may not see in our own lifetimes.

In practice, we are normally far more relaxed about mentioning the book with others than were those who had to protect the early epochal revelations, and I believe that this is almost always good. The point of this study, however, is to make us stop and ponder a bit.

8. Our policies should fit the timing of the world-wide mission of the fifth epochal revelation.

One pattern in epochal revelation is that they do not just explode upon the planet. They unfold in stages. The Adamic bestowal exemplifies a two-stage epochal revelation: a phase of partial contact with the planetary population and a phase of full contact (586.6). There is some analogy to this two-stage revelation to be found in other revelations. The Planetary Prince's staff had an early period of gathering their associates (including the procreation of the primary midways), organizing their headquarters, and establishing their ten councils for service. Melchizedek's mission did not go into high gear with sustaining drive until he had fully won over Abraham And Jesus' mission advanced through a series of stages, even after his public career had begun.

How will we know when the times comes to shift into broader public interface with *The Urantia Book*? There is an impressive consensus that we need thousands of study groups plus translations into major languages plus prepared teachers and leaders. We must be ready to handle the intense questioning and confusion inevitable when the gold rush for truth is on. Another criterion is a settled, stable, peaceful world order.

As a teacher, I know that my first job is to "wake up the question"---to get others to ask the question on which I want to focus. If I proceed to give teaching in answer to a question that others are not asking, I largely waste my

message. I believe that there is also a timed meeting between planetary question and universe answer. What if we pre-empt the rhythm of readiness with premature publicity? The drama of the timed meeting of planetary question and universe answer will be partly lost. Pearl casting precipitates premature rejection and conflict. Aggressively publicizing *The firantio Book* could result in a step backwards. It has happened before—"the weakening of Vedism through the rejection of higher truth" (1028.5). Note that negligence in failing to reach out appropriately with the teachings and the book can also interfere with the timing. Foolish haste or laziness could abort a great hope—with consequences that we do not imagine. What if we work with wise methods? The heart leaps to contemplate the harvest!

Our sincere desire to do things right is met by a wonderful promise. The patient pursuit of wise evolutionary policies may have rapid and dramatic results. "Evolutionary" seems like a synonym for "slow," and as a first approximation, that is correct (749#6). But evolutionary patience does not mean permanent slow motion. If we grow more, the effectiveness of our outreach will multiply. Sometimes evolution moves quickly. "The order of progressive evolution is subjected to sudden and unexpected periodical changes in both the material and the spiritual worlds" (1863.7). "When physical conditions are ripe, sudden mental evolutions may take place; when mind status is propitious, sudden spiritual transformations may occur..." (740.2). The teachings and conduct of the newly arrived Prince's staff had a tremendous influence on nearby tribes (743.10). There is a similar, immediate impact from a normal Adamic mission (586.5). And great possibilities are again with us. After assuring us of the long time it will take to obliterate social class differences through racial, educational, and religious progress, we are told that "much social improvement will immediately result from the intelligent, wise, and patient manipulation of these acceleration factors of cultural progress" (793.8). And there is an intriguing possibility: The social readjustments, the economic transformations, the moral rejuvenations, and the religious revisions of Christian civilization would be drastic and revolutionary if the living religion of Jesus should suddenly supplant the theologic religion about Jesus" (2090.3).

Suppose someone says that in this time of accelerated change, the old evolutionary methods are obsolete. This is like saying that when you hit white water rapids, you can jettison the fundamentals of canoeing. During a period of rapid change, we must still be faithful to the essentials. "And only by adherence to these essentials can man hope to maintain his present-day civilizations while providing for their continued development and certain survival" (912.1).

We must not panic. The revelators of the Urantia Papers anticipated world war at the same time that they predicted a spiritual renaissance (2082.5,7). Being faithful to essentials blocks foolish and harmful projects but does not stifle the progressively aggressive individual (1027.1),

There are many projects with the *teachings* of the book that fall clearly within the scope of reasonableness, projects that call for public work now.

Evolution is not always slow; but ^{evolution} always works. It succeeds where even revelation fails (900.5; 937.6; 990.5). So if we handle our new epochal revelation in ways that squarely align with the tried and true methods of evolutionary revelation, we are sure to be contributing to success. The pursuit of evolutionary methods, however slow they may seem to be, is certain to succeed. Revelation's contribution is fragile; it needs to be handled with wise evolutionary hands.

What is the plan for *The Urantia Book*? Interpretations vary. Here is mine. Recall that the first two epochal revelations had a Plan A, but had to improvise a Plan B; Jesus' Plan A was to win over the Jewish leaders and have the network of synagogues become the distribution channel for the new gospel, while Plan B was to move the center of the gospel movement to the west.

Jesus' teachings are also to function as the foundation of a new and higher civilization (1720.3). This project is in some ways quite unusual. Normally, there is a sequence of revelations, each building upon the previous ones. On the basis of missions that establish the general cultural integrity (educational, familial, intellectual), the spiritual revelation proceeds. The Bestowal Son's spiritualizing mission arrives as the center gem-stone in the lovely ring crafted by the Planetary Prince's staff and the Adamic mission and the intellectual achievements sponsored by the Magisterial Son (591-97). But Jesus arrived to spiritualize a planet whose culture was at best very partial and fragmentary. Because of the rebellion and the default, the relative absence of spiritual-and-cultural revelation on our planet inverts the normal relationship between the kind of epochal mission that serves as the foundation and the kind that thrives on that foundation. Now we are being asked, roughly, to rebuild the culture on a spiritual foundation. *The Urantia Book* can help us to achieve that civilization, giving guidelines to help us make up for lost revelations.

Christianity is in crisis (2082.9). It is the leading world religion, the greatest exponent of Jesus' teachings and the greatest obstacle to them (2085.1-2). The religion of Jesus is guaranteed to triumph (1608,1). Will the great hope of Urantia—for the new revelation to unify the followers of Jesus—be fulfilled (2086.2)?

This epochal revelation is destined to benefit all religions, all peoples; it serves precisely to break down religious barriers, e.g., between those who regard themselves as followers of Jesus and those who do not (1010.4). But Plan A seems to be for *The Urantia Book* to be presented to Christianity in such a way that it gets accepted by a critical mass of believers. If we present the book badly, will it be forced to retire to **the** libraries and study groups of an enthusiastic minority who wait for another Son to vindicate their loyalty? Our policies and conduct will greatly influence the outcome. I do not mean

that readers should focus solely on Christianity or distort their teachings to appeal to Christianity, or join in Christian worship if they have no desire to do so, or regard Christians as "better" than adherents of other religions or as the chosen recipients of the fifth epochal revelation. I do mean that there are some historical street-smarts clearly evident in Jesus' policies that have analogues today.

Readers who arrive at Papers 195 and 96 having digested the lessons of previous epochal revelations are prepared to make *wise* use of the vigorous and specific directives given there. Plan A for *The Urantia Book* seems to be based on the recognition of the need of Christianity for "a new vision of the Master's life on earth" and the promise of "a new and fuller revelation of the religion of Jesus" to overcome mechanism and naturalism (2082.7).

How is the "great revelation" (2082.8) to become effective?

Religion does need new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings. If Christianity persists in neglecting its spiritual mission while it continues to busy itself with social and material problems, the spiritual renaissance must await the coming of these new leaders of Jesus' religion who will be exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of men. And then will these spirit-born souls quickly supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic, and political reorganization of the world. (2082.9)

There follows an appeal for "firsthand religion" and a remarkable musing about how dynamic it would be if people could "see Jesus as he really lived on earth and know, firsthand, his life-giving teachings!" (2083.4) If this seeming fantasy is puzzling, suspense is promptly removed: "The world needs to see Jesus living again on earth in the experience of spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master to all men" (2084.1). Talk of revelation refers here primarily to what transpires *in the lives of believers*. In the next passage, such talk seem to refer as much to the lives of transformed believers as to the book: "The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present-day professed followers" (2086.2).

The creative design of Paper 196 is instructive. It opens with an invigorating portrait of that very Jesus whom we are to reveal in our lives, and then restates Plan A in the first section. "What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!" (2090.3) The paper does not end by sending us forth like missionaries shot from a cannon. Instead, it culminates with a section integrating the dynamic vision of religion with the balanced perspective of the book as a whole. The authors note that progress stems from "*revelational evolution*" (2904.14). It seems reasonable to interpret that our (evolutionary) way of living is to be revelatory and our use of the fifth epochal revelation is to

be evolutionary. The final paragraphs redirect us to "the great challenge to modern man," achieving better contact with the indwelling spirit, and to the life in the Creator Son, and back to the Father.

Plan A for the fifth epochal revelation seems to have the following features:

1. *The stimulus.* Although not every student of *The Urantia Book* is called to this project, the fifth epochal revelation calls for a vanguard of teachers who adhere to the specifics of the spiritual mission of **the gospel** movement. Such teachers of Jesus' religion (who need not necessarily know *The Urantia Book*) are to live the gospel so radiantly and with such second-miler service that they reveal the living Jesus to other people (2084.5). The new revelation of Jesus' life and teachings emerges as transformed believers engage in revelatory living. Recall that Jesus, appearing to Greek and Jewish believers, said, "You are all to proclaim this gospel of love and truth by the lives which you live in the flesh" (2044.3).
2. *A special emphasis.* Although these teachers are to proclaim the gospel to *all* peoples and to the members of *all* religions, there is a certain emphasis on Christianity (1041.4; 2086.2; 2090.3; 1866.4).
3. *A new vehicle of advanced teaching.* Those spirit-born individuals who are found receptive will be introduced to *The Urantia Book*.
4. *The results.* The refreshed, expanded, and reunified Jesus brotherhood will play a major role in the spiritual renaissance, sparking a planetary reorganization,

I infer that putting the lion's share of our energies into participating in this plan directly and supporting it indirectly is the proper way to ensure the success of the fifth epochal revelation. The corollary is that making the book itself our major project is the shortsighted shortcut.

III. Conclusions

Each epochal revelation has its disciplines. Beneficiaries of the first had to return to their native regions as teachers. Guests in the Garden had to give up multiple mates. The primary messengers of the third and fourth epochal revelations had to leave social, economic, and political reconstruction to their hearers. Maybe the students of the fifth epochal revelation are expected to forego treating *The Urantia Book* as a gospel. We tend to want to do it all, to have ourselves or our organizations fill both the functions—the function of **spreading** a deep and thorough spiritual-and cultural revelation and the function of the kind of dynamism that suits the gospel movement. We cannot drive the Mack truck like a Ferrari. The many urgent calls to proclaim the gospel must **not** be taken out of context and applied to *The Urantia Book* itself. The book does not precede or accompany the public gospel

message, but follows it. From the day of the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth, Peter and his associates inverted the gospel and featured as the leading edge of their proclamation truths which were supposed to be grasped secondarily. As a result, acceptance of Jesus' divine Sonship became the gateway to the Christian proclamation of the Father's love. Countless people naturally stumbled at this gate, and the brotherhood of man has suffered. Today, an overemphasis on the book rather than the realities it discloses unwittingly fosters a religion about *The Urantia Book* (2086,1).

Those who desire to be primarily active in bringing the book to those who are ready for it have many frontiers for fully legitimate and heroic activity. They can move to areas where no study group exists, and get to know people, introduce them selectively to the book, and start a study group. They can get to know individuals in a local religious or other group where they are likely to meet a high proportion of candidates for the book. They can even start up correspondence with internet acquaintances or with authors who have published forward-thinking articles and introduce the book in the context of a flourishing relationship. And many other projects fall within the ballpark delineated by the foregoing principles. We do not have to choose between do-nothing stagnation and risky publicity. There are many superb endeavors that are being largely neglected.

Students who desire to introduce *The Urantia Book* to others in accord with its teachings learn to work with evolutionary resources and to attract prospective readers by revelatory living. Seeking out groups with high average receptivity, and sharing appropriate truths, they do not confuse the book with the gospel, and they avoid pearl casting. They get to know receptive individuals by meeting together more than once, and they see that the individual is born of the spirit. When they discern cultural as well as spiritual receptivity, they introduce such individuals to the fifth epochal revelation in loyalty and joy and trust.

These ideals are so challenging that it is tempting to pursue an easier path. It is understandable that we err, on account of the complexity of our book, the mistakes of certain leaders, and the material emotions that course through the limited minds of every one of us. But experimenting with unreasonable publicity for the book takes risks for all of us and for posterity; and such conduct consumes precious time on the part of **our** unseen friends who are obliged to devote themselves to damage limitation.

By the mercy of God we can do better. We can enlist as mortal partners on a great team. We can prepare to reap the mixed seed that has been sown and to lay more solid foundations for the future. Responsible readers experiment *within* the guidelines, not *with* the guidelines. What a gift to posterity to conduct ourselves henceforth in accord with the teachings of the book entrusted to us! We shall broadcast selected teachings, especially the gospel, and wisely share the book itself with receptive individuals who, for the most part, we find already "in the temple".

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