



JOURNAL

Who Am I

DAVID C. GRAVES
Canada

David has been a reader of The Urantia Book since 1995 but his spiritual hunger dates much earlier than that. His long standing spiritual hunger has taken him from one 'personal discovery' to another; discoveries that, he says, seem to reveal the Divine Plan to him. They represent 'his experience' and 'his experience alone'. We each experience our ascension journey differently and so should it be!

LET ME TELL YOU HOW I CAME TO BE here. During the Second World War, my dad-to-be was stationed at Sydney Air Force Station on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. When it came time for him to be posted, two posting instructions arrived. In those days, these instructions did not select personnel by name. Instead, the next airman in line was posted. In my father's case, he was either first or second on the list when the postings arrived. To settle who would be posted where, the top two airmen tossed a coin. So, on the flip of a coin, my dad-to-be came to be posted to Kamloops in British Columbia where he met and courted my mom-to-be. So, I guess you could say, "I'm here because of the flip of a coin."

I have always been one to ask, "Who am I?" "Am I alone in the universe?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?"

However, I do not believe that my being here occurred par hazard. I hold it to be true that there is a reason for my being!

This has led me on a quest to discover just what that reason is. I have always been one to ask, "Who am I?" "Am I alone in the universe?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?" It is perhaps a natural consequence of this quest that *The Urantia Book* came into my hands.



Who Am I collage.

Of particular import for me is the Urantian use of the word **personality**. This particular application of the word gave expression to a thought that had heretofore been inexpressible to the point of becoming inaccessible—even though I sensed I fully grokked the notion. Before the word, I could only express the notion metaphorically; by analogy with a hologram (in particular to a discrete piece of a shattered holographic plate).

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Greetings Fellow Urantia Book Readers,

WELCOME TO THE 2ND Edition of the UAI Journal for 2009! In this edition we will be touring the human experience from personal beginnings to discoveries, decisions, outcomes and speculations. Then we will embark upon a philosophical debate concerning reincarnation, and in finality we will emerge within the beyond and embark upon the next level of our being – from another direction.

Contributing to the personal journeys of humankind this issue unfolds with four personal expeditions. The first is a story by David Graves who asks with wonder, one of the most popular questions, *“Who Am I”* and ascertains: *“This sense of wonder is something many of us have shared from time to time while, with curious eyes, we scan the twinkling stars that fill the night skies and ponder upon such imponderables as: Who am I? Am I alone in the universe? Why am I here? Where am I going?”*

The second essay comes from Andre Traversa and is a two-part retrospective into his life as perceived through his Christian Faith: *“In my mind I knew that doctrines like eternal damnation and atonement did not make sense, but in my heart, I wanted to feel forgiven and cleansed of guilt. This explains my pendulum swing for so many years.”* In part two Andre offers insight into why some people stay with Christianity after learning of *The Urantia Book* and how readers of *The Urantia Book* might benefit from exposure to the Christian community, all the while suggesting that readers should not be too quick to judge people of the Christian faith.

Our third personal perspective is from Chris Wood and is in preparation for the upcoming Urantia Conference in Boulder, Colorado on June 25-29th and is reflective of the arena in which the conference will unfold. Chris delves deep into what it takes to succeed in the morontia worlds. In *The Second Mile as Job Application: 2000 Words on Joining the Reversion Directors*, Chris reflects on moments in history, and in doing so, discovers that *“Good acts, those acts by which one person can lead, enlighten, and*

guide another person as they journey up the hill toward spiritual understanding, are commonly referred to the revelation of God to man and man to God. Good attitude, however, reveals the motivation behind these acts, and distinguishes between duty and service. I think I’ll apply for that job too!

In their spiritual journeys these authors at some time or another have probably pondered the subject of reincarnation, as has our next contributor Seppo Kanerva. Seppo first asks the tough questions from the viewpoint of a staunch believer in this endless procession of personality: *“Could I not defend the doctrine of reincarnation by an assertion that reincarnation is needful for personality to develop adequately in order to be prepared for a transition to the next phase of existence?”* Then he skillfully answers those questions by philosophically erasing the foundations of personal multiple personality arrays, while drawing upon several interesting historical substantiations and textual references within *The Urantia Book*.

Our fifth discourse comes to us from the last century and via the mansion worlds and is by our esteemed morontia world Urantia Book Professor, William Sadler, Jr. Better known as Bill, Sadler was a gifted student of *The Urantia Book*, who also had a talent for distilling its most complex teachings into conversational language. Some of his informal talks were recorded and this article was developed from a transcript of such a presentation to a study group sometime within the period of 1958 and 1959. He also authored *A Study of the Master Universe* and its Appendices.

In “Personal Growth and Mansion World Arrival,” Bill entertains us with several compelling and humorous facts based on various conversations throughout time. In this transcript he admonishes us to *“Stop and think: We are the farthest out. We are the lowest on the totem pole. There is nothing below us which can know God. And yet, he’s given us a part of himself, something which I would expect him to do to folks that were*

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way up on topside. And yet, he doesn’t indwell them. He doesn’t even indwell our near of kin, unless they’ve done time, so to speak. The Adams usually have to serve on a world. The secondary midwayers wait a long time to get this. And yet, it’s our birthright. Isn’t it amazing?”

All in all each essay gives us a unique perspective we can personally touch – and in doing so perhaps eventually discover... “Faith can move mountains, and it’s a wonder when we see that sometimes the mountains can be you and me”... smk

Suzanne Kelly ■

Who Am I, continued from page 1

Let me explain.

While studying optics as an undergraduate student in engineering, I took part in a laboratory experiment that examined holographic images captured on glass plates (the glass plate being the equivalent of a negative in the context of pre-digital photography). To help you better understand exactly what a hologram is, think back to Star Wars (if you can) and the scene with R2D2 where Luke views a holographic, three-dimensional projection of Princess Leah. That true-to-life, albeit miniature, image of Princess Leah was standing in free space and could be heard to say, “Help me Obi-Wan Kenobi, you’re my only hope.”

Princess Leah was a hologram in that scene. The projected light-beam (also visible in the scene) had passed through a holographic glass plate which provided the information necessary to construct the image of Princess Leah in free-space.

At the conclusion of the experiment my lab instructor had me return the glass plate to storage and, while doing so, I accidentally dropped it. It shattered into what seemed like hundreds of pieces. I turned to look at my instructor with a sense of trepidation. You see, the study of holography was in its infancy at the time and holographic plates were very expensive to produce. Surprisingly, the accident became an opportunity for further study.

Consider that equivalent “negative” for a moment. If you were to tear that negative into pieces and then use one such piece to develop a picture, what would you see? The resulting picture would be a partial reconstruction of the original based on the piece of information contained within the portion of the negative used. Right? Right!

Guess what happened when a single shard of that broken holographic plate was used to generate a hologram. Have you guessed?

The image was reproduced in its entirety!

The size of the shard seemed not to matter. Each and every shard could reproduce the whole! Each shard, no matter how small, carried all the information necessary to reproduce the whole.

Before I explain how this analogy empowered me to express the wordless thought I spoke of above, let me quote from the essay, *Personality and Man*, which George Park presented at Villanova University during IC05.

“*The Urantia Book* reveals a spiritual concept of personality which is new to mankind. We are aware of personality, but man has never conceived of personality as a reality in and of itself. We see the differences between form, substance, and essence, but man has failed to recognize the independent reality of personal presence.”

It may also be useful to consider two additional quotes taken from *The Urantia Book* at this time.

The personality of mortal man is neither body, mind, nor spirit; neither is it the soul. [9:1]

Personality, in the supreme sense, is the revelation of God to the universe of universes. [29:3]

The Urantia Book empowered me to use the word-symbol “personality” for what had heretofore been wordless thought. Until I had that word-symbol, my only means for both accessing and addressing that thought was by means of a metaphor—the analogy of the holographic shard. The shard metaphorically represented what I perceived to be an **instance** of God through the agency of which God became knowable to me. Our revelation told me that personality of the finite mortal type, bestowed by the First Person of Deity, reveals God to his universe (just as my holographic metaphor had already done for me).

... personality of the finite mortal type, bestowed by the First Person of Deity, reveals God to his universe

That one word-symbol provides for me the true measure of the value of our Fifth Epochal Revelation. What a wonder it was! I now had a word for a thought the presence of which in my mind had previously been virtually inexpressible. That word transformed a notional concept from the ephemeral to the well established; from the ethereal to the very tangible. It truly was a personal revelation!

Recall that our revelators began their narrative by pointing to the *paucity of language* and the resulting difficulty they had in conveying their revelation to us, the readers of their narrative [9:4]. It seems to me that we must be ever mindful of this observation and recognize that there is often more to the words we read than may be evident at first glance. Our challenge is to discover the meaning behind the words; the meanings the words allow us to access. We need also to keep ever in mind an additional constraint that underlies this same narrative.

The revelators forthrightly alert us to the conditions placed upon their mandate. They explain that, as they present their revelation, they must always give preference to the highest existing human concepts. They also tell us that they can only *resort to pure revelation only when the concept of presentation has had no adequate previous expression by the human mind* (for example, **morontia** and **mota** are pure revelation whereas the **Trinity** and **virgin birth** are not) [16:7]. Take note that their mandate deems *adequate expression* to be sufficient to their purpose. Hence, any existing concept, as expressed by a human mind, need not be precisely correct; it need only be more or less adequate; more or less good enough.

Recall that our revelators began their narrative by pointing to the paucity of language and the resulting difficulty they had in conveying their revelation to us...

At this point another equally pertinent observation needs to be made.

The revelators are supernal; they are not human-beings. So, when the text reads, “We can (or cannot) ..., do (or do not) ...” or the like, **it does not necessarily follow** that we humans are so constrained. True, it well may be that we are. But it can equally be the case that **we may be uniquely qualified** to do what supernals cannot!

For example, a Divine Counselor says,

*Personality is one of the unsolved mysteries of the universes. We are able to form adequate concepts of the factors entering into the make-up of various orders and levels of personality, but we do not fully comprehend the real nature of the personality itself. We clearly perceive the numerous factors which, when put together, constitute the vehicle for **human** <my emphasis> personality, but we do not fully comprehend the nature and significance of such a finite personality. [70:3]*

But we humans may be uniquely qualified to comprehend what they do not.

It is important to notice that the Divine Counselor took pains to specifically identify the type of personality that was beyond comprehension as human. Given that we are personalities of the finite mortal type and Divine Counselors are not, we may be uniquely qualified to do what a Divine Counselor cannot! The exhortation, “Know

The achievement of Deity liberation suggests a prior confinement and liberation from ... fetters of personality absolutism and speaks to breaking free from bondage.

thyself!” may well be the single most important piece of advice to come down to us by way of human expression.

At this point, should you be inclined to enforce the so-called *Law of Observation*, which states that the observer cannot be the subject of observation, consider this remark found in

George Park’s IC05 essay.

“...there is more to personal experience than the law of observation. In the paper on the Seven Master Spirits, a Universal Censor says...” *Creature personality is distinguished by two self-manifesting and characteristic phenomena of mortal reactive behavior: self-consciousness and associated relative free will [194:5].* Self-consciousness transcends the law of observation; the self-conscious observer is **reflectively** aware of the thing observed.

So, where are we?

I have tried to explain that *The Urantia Book* provides me with a language. That language gives tangible expression to the discoveries I had made in my pre-blue-book spiritual journey. These discoveries are very much the baggage I bring to this discussion. Finally, I think these bags are well suited to continuing my quest with the blue book as my guide.

Before sharing why I believe this baggage to be well suited to my post-revelation ascension career I wish to make two things clear. First, I claim not that I understand, but that I want to understand; and second, I hope you will



“Who Am I” collage.

be free with your criticism, whether it be constructive or destructive, so long as it is from the heart.

How best to start? Perhaps like this. Why the universe of universes? I believe it goes something like this ...

I believe it was Deepak Chopra’s granddaughter who once said, “We have eyes so that the stars can see themselves!” Take some time to reflect upon just exactly what she meant by this simple and insightful assertion. Her perspicacity is remarkable!

Let me paraphrase. The stars come to know themselves **because we see them**.

Could the answer to the question, “Why the universe of universes?” be that simple! Could the purpose of creation be to allow the I AM to see that HE IS?

Consider the following:

*As a time-space creature would view the origin and differentiation of Reality, the eternal and infinite I AM **achieved Deity liberation from the fetters of unqualified infinity** <my emphasis> through the exercise of inherent and eternal free will.... [6:1]*

*A strange thing occurred when, in the presence of Paradise, the Universal Father and the Eternal Son unite to personalize themselves. Nothing in this eternity situation foreshadows that the Conjoint Actor would personalize as an unlimited spirituality co-ordinated with absolute mind and endowed with unique prerogatives of energy manipulation. His coming into being completes the Father’s liberation from the bonds of centralized perfection and from **the fetters of personality absolutism** <my emphasis>.... [98:1]*

The achievement of *Deity liberation* suggests a prior confinement and *liberation from ... fetters of personality absolutism* and speaks to breaking free from bondage. Such language strikes me as contra-intuitive to say

the very least. It describes the I AM as confined by, or confined in, infinity and eternity. It speaks of the Father being in bondage because of perfection! The revelators continue with this strange language when they note that the absolute perfection of the infinite God causes him to *suffer the awful limitations of unqualified finality of perfectness* [29:5]. They go on to say that this would continue to be the case were it not for the fact that

the Universal Father directly participates in the personality struggle <my emphasis> of every imperfect soul in the wide universe who seeks, by divine aid, to ascend to the spiritually perfect worlds on high. This progressive experience of every spirit being and every mortal creature throughout the universe of universes is a part of the Father's ever-expanding Deity-consciousness of the never-ending divine circle of ceaseless self-realization. [29:5]

What does this mean?

Hopefully, I do not appear too presumptuous when, once again, I offer a paraphrase.

The I AM chooses to make the qualified Absolutes distinct from the Unqualified. The expression of the Trinity relationship on Paradise is the immediate consequence of this inherent and eternal free will act. The concomitant consequence of Trinity and Paradise is the universe of universes. The universe of universes is the arena of action wherein spirit beings and mortal creatures act. The outcome of action is experience. When experience is both replete and complete, God the Supreme eventuates. God the Supreme is experientially self-aware. And so it is that the experiential divine circle finds the closure that contributes to God knowing himself.

How does this come about?

Through a free will act of volition, the I AM chooses to step out of the state of eternal and infinite unity, wherein the potential for relationships does not exist. As Deity, which personalizes as God, the I AM gains from participation in our personality struggle. Experience reintegrates godhead into something more than before. Such is the ordained outcome of this free will choice the I AM makes.

In the simplest of terms: prior to creation, the I AM cannot see that HE IS, but creation changes that.”

Recalling that God the Supreme is the outcome of action, it would appear that creation, the arena of action, makes it possible for the I AM to see that HE IS. The question we ask ourselves must now be, “Who or what is the agent of action?”

I believe one of the quotes above has already answered that question. An agent of action is a spiritual being or mortal creature of progressive experience who



“Who Am I” photo.

contributes to expanding the consciousness of Deity through the divine circle of self-realization.

But just what, exactly, constitutes a progressive experience?

I think that answer must be a function of choices made using free-will. I feel comfortable with this answer because the revelators tell us the following:

- 1 Experience gained through each and every free-will choice that is in accordance with the divine plan contributes to growing the soul.
- 2 The ‘soul’ contributes to the eventuation of God the Supreme.

Because it seems reasonable to conclude that progressive experience requires free-will, I ask my question again, “Who or what is the agent of action?”

The agent of action must, at a minimum, possess free-will. As a consequence of this requirement it seems to logically follow that, regardless of type, an agent of action must be a person (where, being a benefactor of personality bestowal from God the Father-the First Person of Deity-denotes person-hood).

Experience reintegrates godhead into something more than before. Such is the ordained outcome of this free will choice the I AM makes.

Let me summarize once again. An arena of action is necessary for the I AM to “see” that HE IS. Agents of action in that arena must be persons. It is only through the Father’s bestowal of divine personality that spiritual beings and self-conscious mortal creatures are persons.

Oh, and one other thing ...

God is neither self-centered nor self-contained; he never ceases to bestow himself upon all self-conscious creatures of the vast universe of universes. [36:3]

"Who Am I" photo.



Is this last observation as full of portent for you as it is for me?

Why so portentous? Think about it. God, the *sine qua non* of personality, unceasingly bestows himself upon self-conscious creatures. Does this bestowal of self-ness not explicitly imply the gift of personality? Surely there is no reason to mistake His bestowing Himself for his follow-on bestowal—the prepersonal bestowal that is consequent upon personality’s first moral choice. When the revelators say that He unceasingly bestows Himself upon all self-conscious creatures, they **are speaking of the bestowal of divine personality.**

Next question: can we not say that in bestowing his self-ness God is bestowing the very “*stu*” of God-ness? That personality is god-*stu*? There is no irreverence in this question. When, in the moment, we are at a loss for words, we often use “*stu*” to describe what we would not otherwise be able to articulate. It is in that sense that I use it. Personality is “*stu*” I really cannot otherwise describe; it is the “*stu* of God.”

Put it this way. The revelators tell us that ...

Without God and except for his great and central person, there would be no personality throughout all the vast universe of universes. God is personality. [28:4]

There is concomitant realization that adds to the portentousness of this observation for me. This understanding immediately brings forth another revelation. Suddenly I realize that, when we learn that we are made in the image of God, the image I see in the mirror is not what is being described. Rather, reference is being made to the god-*stu* ‘imaged’ in, or manifested by, my being! You and I are persons in the Urantian sense of that word. You and I are persons and persons are god-*stu*.

Take a deep breath, pause for a second, and consider Marianne Williamson’s observation:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We

ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It seems to me that personality, the *stu* of God, is the actor manifesting the glory of God that is within us. Personality is the light that shines so that men can be led to glorify God. This is what I perceive to be the full portent of that revelatory Urantian word-symbol—the meaning accessed by the word.

Personality is a unique endowment of original nature whose existence is independent of, and antecedent to, the bestowal of the Thought Adjuster. Nevertheless, the presence of the Adjuster does augment the qualitative manifestation of personality. Thought Adjusters, when they come forth from the Father, are identical in nature, but personality is diverse, original, and exclusive; and the manifestation of personality is further conditioned and qualified by the nature and qualities of the associated energies of a material, mindal, and spiritual nature which constitute the organismal vehicle for personality manifestation. [194:3]

God, being eternal, universal, absolute, and infinite, does not grow in knowledge nor increase in wisdom. God does not acquire experience, as finite man might conjecture or comprehend, but he does, within the realms of his own eternal personality, enjoy those continuous expansions of self-realization which are in certain ways comparable to, and analogous with, the acquirement of new experience by the finite creatures of the evolutionary worlds. [29:4]

Could it be that this refers to the actions of each divine personality bestowal as made manifest by every organismal vehicle? It seems to me that we are getting down to those imponderables I mentioned at the outset. Who am I? Am I alone in the universe? Why am I here? Where am I going?

The answers seem to be taking shape this way. I am a person and I am not alone. I can help the **IAM** come to see that **HE IS** and, in so doing, I am working to reintegrate godhead and, through this ascension journey, I am taken home! To refer to an earlier quotation once again, *the Universal Father directly participates in the personality struggle of every imperfect soul in the wide universe who seeks, by divine aid, to ascend to the spiritually perfect worlds on high [29:5].*

The **IAM** chooses to become **WE ARE** to see that **HE IS.** ■

The Urantia Book and My Christian Faith

ANDRE TRAVERSA
USA

Andre Traversa is a freelance writer, media consultant, and life coach living in Park Ridge, Illinois. He has been reading The Urantia Book since 1984 and is currently a co-host, along with Paula Thompson, of The Cosmic Citizen, a Urantia Book-based online radio show. He can be reached at goandre@xnet.com.

I came not to take away that which you had from your forefathers but to show you the perfected vision of that which your fathers saw only in part. [1592:4]

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY CONSISTS OF TWO parts: Part I is personal and autobiographical, Part II is my attempt to educate readers of *The Urantia Book* about the generally pro-Christian content of the Revelation; something I believe is often missed by those who come to the book with an anti-Christian axe to grind.

I mean no disrespect to those who have been hurt by organized religion, Christian or otherwise. I merely wish to provide another perspective for the general edification of the Urantia community.

PART I: Would you like to ask Jesus into your heart?

I was five years old, and the woman who asked me that question was my school bus driver. She was a sweet southern lady, and it was through her that I first learned that it was possible to have a deep, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Thankfully, those were the good old days before political correctness—the days when teachers and other childcare professionals could exercise individual judgment without fear of litigation from the ACLU or some other group of busybodies claiming the separation of church and state.

I had grown up in a nominally Catholic home, and my only exposure to religion was occasional attendance at study Ukrainian ethnic Masses that were no place for a small child. While my beloved grandmother shared a deep faith with me, my mom and dad were decidedly secular; my dad was essentially an atheist.

Therefore, when my bus driver told me that Jesus wanted to know me personally, to be my friend, it was all very new to me but it was enough to excite my childhood imagination. “Yes,” I said, and believed.



“The Urantia Book And My Christian Faith” collage.

When I came home, I immediately told my mom about it. “That’s nice, honey,” she said, and went right back to whatever she was doing. But I knew something special had happened to me, and I often wonder if that was the day I received my Thought Adjuster.

I did not have any genuine Christian fellowship, so I could not follow through on that experience. Yet, I always had a keen interest in the supernatural—my favorite literary genres were science fiction and children’s fantasy. I also love folk and fairy tales. And, of course, I was a big radio fan. Growing up as a blind child, while other kids watched TV, I listened to the radio and eventually made a career of it.

Like most kids, I grew up on rock and roll, but I soon discovered Christian radio.

Specifically, I found a program called “Unshackled,” a tacky radio drama series complete with bad organ music and B-movie dialog. Yet, I was attracted to the program because it featured stories of people whose lives were changed after they had received Jesus Christ as their personal savior. I wanted what those people had, but I was not sure how to get it.

At about this time, the summer before my freshman year in high school, I was taking a creative writing class in which I wrote a poem. I am not good at poetry, but I thought it was one of my better efforts. I present it here for your consideration:

I am the fish that swim in the ocean,
I am the catastrophe after the explosion,
I am the birds that sit in the trees,
I am the leaves that blow in the breeze.
I am the book you read before bed,
I am the thoughts you have in your head.
I am the past, the present, the future;
I am everywhere;
I am.

I shared this poem with my best friend at the time, and he shared it with his father, who had been reading *The Urantia Book* for several years. Apparently, his dad thought I had spiritual potential, so he suggested that his son tell me about *The Urantia Book*.

I have to confess that at first, *The Urantia Book* both fascinated and scared me at the same time. I wanted to believe it, but it seemed too good to be true. In some respects, it differed radically from The Bible teachings I was hearing on Christian radio—it retained the best elements of Christianity, yet somehow there was none of the fear and guilt that often went with those teachings.

I started attending Urantia Book study groups at my friend's house, and continued going until my family moved to another city six months later. I did not know of any study groups in my local area, so my only spiritual nourishment came from Christian radio. At that time, I started listening to a program called Rock Talk, hosted by two former rock musicians who were now born-again Christians. One of them gave out his phone number on the air, and I gave him a call. He and his partner would talk with me for hours; I would quote *The Urantia Book*, and they would quote The Bible.

At one point, they told me about a book called, *Seeds of Change*, by Kerry Livgren. Livgren was formerly involved with the rock band Kansas and had been immersed in *The Urantia Book* for a few years until he, too, became a born-again Christian. I read his testimony and was moved to tears. I promptly called up my radio friend, and he led me in a prayer to receive Christ as my personal savior.

I think I can honestly say that this was my first direct experience with God; I was truly born of the Spirit, and felt the palpable presence of God for the first time in my life. But I still did not know where to look for Christian fellowship, and I quickly reverted back to *The Urantia Book*.

For years, I went back and forth like a pendulum, straddling the fence between *The Urantia Book* and evangelical Christianity. I struggled with doubts, questions, and, quite frankly, a lot of fears.

I think I drove my friends in both camps a little bit crazy, though I must confess, my friends in the Urantia movement were far more tolerant of my doubts and struggles than were many of my evangelical brethren.

At this point, it might be helpful to explain why I was attracted to Bible-based evangelical Christianity in the first place. My initial exposure to *The Urantia Book* was strictly intellectual; *The Urantia Book* spoke to my mind, but it left my heart cold. I think one reason for this was that the study groups I attended were devoid of prayer, group worship, and the kind of warm, intimate fellowship that characterized my experience in many Christian churches. Studying *The Urantia Book* seemed

...at first, The Urantia Book both fascinated and scared me at the same time. I wanted to believe it, but it seemed too good to be true.



"The Urantia Book And My Christian Faith" photo.

to have become an academic exercise rather than an opportunity to build relationships and grow closer to God. My mind was being nourished, but my heart was hungry for something more. At evangelical Christian churches, I had exactly the opposite experience. My heart was filled with the joy of group worship and I was edified by the testimonies of people who saw God moving mightily in their lives. I could pray with these people, bond with them, and take part in a shared experience of communion with our Heavenly Father.

I wanted what these people had: a personal, life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, and because I was so attracted to the love I felt from these people, I was naturally attracted to their theology as well.

In my mind I knew that doctrines like eternal damnation and atonement did not make sense, but in my heart, I wanted to feel forgiven and cleansed of guilt. This explains my pendulum swing for so many years—I found intellectual satisfaction in *The Urantia Book*, but Christianity was nourishing my heart.

I eventually rejected *The Urantia Book* entirely and immersed myself in both Catholic and Protestant churches for the next ten years. I finally came back to *The Urantia Book* in 2006, but my reasons for returning to our beautiful revelation are beyond the scope of this article, so I will end the autobiographical part of this piece and move on to address my broader concerns.

Christianity contains enough of Jesus' teachings to immortalize it. [2086:4].

PART II

Although I had been searching for truth, and was starting to believe that *The Urantia Book* could be a revelation, I still craved community with those who shared my cravings. I might never have gone back and forth to various Christian churches trying to fill the void if such fellowship and sharing could have been found within *The Urantia Book* readership. If that fellowship would have existed within *The Urantia Book* study groups, I still would have attended Christian churches, but not as a hungry soul, starving for fellowship and community. I would have infiltrated the church as a bootlegger, planting the seeds of truth wherever possible.

Over the years, in my interactions with readers of *The Urantia Book*, I have sometimes encountered a strong anti-Christian bias. I have heard readers say some outrageous things, such as:

“We should not pray to Jesus; we should only pray to the Father.”

“Jesus is not God; he is just our Creator Son, so we should not worship him.”

Since *The Urantia Book* raises objections to certain points in Christian theology, a superficial reading of the text might lead one to conclude that the authors are attacking the Christian faith. Rather than viewing such disparities as attacks, I would contend that such statements are intended as friendly concerns or explanations rather than harsh criticisms. Many of *The Urantia Book*'s critiques of Christianity were borrowed from Christian writers. For example, it states that Christianity had largely become a gospel about Jesus—as opposed to the gospel of Jesus—was recognized by many liberal Protestant scholars in the early 1900s, just prior to *The Urantia Book*'s inception. These writers include Benjamin Bacon, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Rufus Jones and Walter Bundy. Bundy even wrote a book, called *The Religion of Jesus*, which was one of many books from which the Revelators culled source material. This means that the best Christian thinkers throughout history have understood the limitations and problems of their own faith, but also believed that Christianity carries within its tremendous recuperative power sources—the seeds of its own recovery.

Yet, more to the point, while *The Urantia Book* corrects some major errors in Christian teaching, it also builds on and affirms many Christian doctrines, including most of the Nicene Creed. Let us consider one central doctrine: the deity of Christ.

One of the most common objections Christian apologists raise about *The Urantia Book* is that it denies the deity of Jesus. While it is true that *The Urantia Book* denies Jesus' traditional Christian place as the second person of the Trinity, it should be remembered that one purpose of the Revelation is to give us an expanded view of the universe; and correspondingly, an expanded view of Deity.

One clue we have that *The Urantia Book* supports the orthodox position on Jesus as deity is its rejection of the Arian heresy. The Arian Heresy, named after its founder, Arius, taught that Jesus Christ was almost, but not fully, divine in nature; that he was subordinate and therefore not equal to the Father. However, *The Urantia Book* states:

It was a Greek, from Egypt, who so bravely stood up at Nicaea and so fearlessly challenged this assembly that it dared not so obscure the concept of the nature of Jesus that the real truth of his bestowal might have been in danger of being lost to the world. This Greek's name was Athanasius, and but for the eloquence and the logic of this believer, the persuasions of Arius would have triumphed. [2070:14]

When reviewing *The Urantia Book*'s teachings on the deity of Jesus, it is important to distinguish between fact and truth. The fact is that Jesus is not the second person of the Trinity; he is not the Eternal Son. However, in truth, we are told that our Master Son possesses in his realm all of the divine attributes and powers that the Eternal Son himself would manifest were he actually to be present on Salvington and functioning in Nebadon.

We are also told that this Universe Son is also the personification of the Universal Father to the universe of Nebadon. So, according to *The Urantia Book*, Jesus not only embodies all of the attributes of the Eternal Son, but also contains within himself all the attributes of the Universal Father. We can see then that *The Urantia Book* not only teaches the deity of Jesus, but enhances it as well.

It seems that some readers of *The Urantia Book* are really closet Arians. In a recent e-mail exchange, one person wrote that it was wrong to worship Jesus. When I pointed out that Jesus not only allowed his followers to worship him but also accepted a whole list of divine names and titles [1408:7-1409:0], I was told this was merely a concession to evolutionary religion. In other words, Jesus allowed such worship as an act of condescension to his poor weak followers who needed a tangible object of adoration.

But Adam and Eve never made such concessions. When the primitive humans of the surrounding tribes venerated them as gods, the Adamic couple quickly put a stop to such idolatry. This means that Jesus accepted worship because he was worthy of it and because such adoration was proper, given his divine status as the living incarnation of the Father.

Speaking of the incarnation, there is another classic Christian doctrine boldly affirmed in the pages of *The Urantia Book*. In Paper 120, *Jesus Early Manhood*, we read:

...the best Christian thinkers throughout history have understood the limitations and problems of their own faith, but also believed that Christianity carries within its tremendous recuperative power sources—the seeds of its own recovery.

The Urantia Book And My Christian Faith photo.



Christ Michael did not progressively become God. God did not, at some vital moment in the earth life of Jesus, become man. Jesus was God and man—always and even forevermore. And this God and this man were, and now are, one, even as the Paradise Trinity of three beings is in reality one Deity. [1331:3]

We also read,

*Christ Michael, while truly a dual-origin being, was not a double personality. He was not God in association **with** man but, rather, God **incarnate** in man. And he was always just that combined being. The only progressive factor in such a nonunderstandable relationship was the progressive self-conscious realization and recognition (by the human mind) of this fact of being God and man. [1331:2]*

As we can clearly see, here the doctrines of both the incarnation and the hypostatic union (the blended human and divine natures of Jesus) are affirmed without apology.

While it is safe to say that *The Urantia Book* corrects some errors in Christian doctrine, it is also probable that some readers come at the book with an anti-Christian bias and use certain passages as proof to confirm their own prejudices. In doing so, they may miss the many positive statements the authors make about the Christian faith. A typical misunderstanding is the way the authors view Paul. One source of this misunderstanding is the use of the word “compromise” to describe Paul’s approach to spreading the Gospel. It is commonly believed that Abner had the right idea and that Paul sold us out. While the Revelators lament the tragic loss of Jesus’ unadulterated Gospel (submerged as it was in a sea of Hellenized and paganized Christianity), they also tell us that Abner had lousy interpersonal skills and was not able to accomplish much due to his rigid doctrinal purity. Some compromise was not only inevitable, but necessary to adapt the emerging religions of revelation to the slow progress of evolution. Jesus himself compromised, in at least two

instances: He submitted to John’s baptism as a means of gaining acceptance from John’s followers, thereby associating himself with an evolutionary religion. And he also deliberately fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy by riding into Jerusalem on an ass. Neither one of these acts was a necessary part of Jesus’ revealed gospel, but he performed both of them to establish credibility with the Jewish masses.

In reference to Paul, the authors tell us:

And while he may have unnecessarily encumbered Christianity with teachings about blood and sacrifice, he did once and for all make an end of the doctrines of redemption through human or animal sacrifices. His theologic compromises indicate that even revelation must submit to the graduated control of evolution. [984:2]

[984:2]

The Urantia Book also cites Paul as being one of the greatest teachers of the Christian era, aside from Jesus himself. [1008:7]

And finally, I would like to take note of two other pro-Christian statements from the text of *The Urantia Book*. It tells us, *Thus does the so-called Christian church become the cocoon in which the kingdom of Jesus’ concept now slumbers [1866:4]*. The word, “so-called,” in this passage, can be taken as a pejorative reference to the Christian church, but it is worth pointing out that the authors do not point to the temple, the mosque, or the synagogue as being the resting places of the now slumbering kingdom. Only the Christian Church bears this distinct honor and privilege.

We are told that Christianity contains enough of Jesus’ teachings to *immortalize it [2086:4]*. *The Urantia Book* does not say that about any other religion; it says it only in reference to Christianity.

I opened this essay with a quote from Jesus, indicating that he had come to build on existing religious teachings, not to overthrow them. In the same way that Jesus built on the law and the prophets, *The Urantia Book* builds on existing Christian teachings, even while it up steps and corrects many Christian doctrines. I hope and pray that my testimony and subsequent reflections have edified and informed readers regarding Christianity and its relation to the Urantia revelation. I also hope to increase tolerance for the Christian faith. It seems that in our politically correct age, it is okay to tolerate every religion except Christianity.

I have had many beautiful experiences of God’s presence at Urantia Book conferences, but the Urantia movement still has much to learn about this palpable presence, much of which can be absorbed from evangelical Christians and their lively, spirit-filled services.

Remember, we have hearts as well as minds, and the Christian church contains much that can water the gardens of our hearts even as we soak up all that *The Urantia Book* offers to our minds. ■

The Second Mile as a Job Application

CHRIS WOOD
USA

Chris Wood is a second generation reader of The Urantia Book who has devoted much of the past three years to organizing Urantia Book conferences. In the following article, he discusses the theme for the upcoming Boulder conference, "The Second Mile and Beyond." The conference will be held June 25-28.

REVERSION DIRECTOR. NOW THAT sounds like a good job. Helping those souls, worn out after a long ascension, to relax with humor and mirth. In theory the job is open to us. It says that their ranks are populated by volunteers from all levels of ascending and descending beings, including ours, but in another place it says you have to be recruited. Whether that is the type of recruitment we do for our local group's vacant vice-presidency (anyone who wants it can have it) or if Miguel De Cervantes needs to walk up to you with a personal invitation into the ranks, it does not say. But still, it's a job, and there are bound to be openings. It sounds nice.

A reversion director helps take you back to when your soul was younger, when you were struggling with tasks you have long since mastered, when you were faced with a choice and made an Ultimate decision with a capital "U." They guide you from where you have been to where you are now, and this is a service in the same way that a good sermon is a service. It energizes you for the tasks ahead.

I won't pretend to know the roles and responsibilities of all of the jobs in the master universe. I will, however, for the sake of this article, pretend to know a subtle distinction between good acts and good attitudes. Good acts, those acts by which one person can lift, enlighten, and guide another person as they journey up the hill toward spiritual understanding, are commonly referred to as the revelation of God to man and man to God. Good attitude, however, reveals the motivation behind these acts, and distinguishes between duty and service. Good attitude is the characteristic of the Second Mile.

Jesus made no distinction between his life and his work. No matter what the job, Jesus used it as a way to further his mortal and divine career. Jesus was a teacher. His lessons were on love and his method was service. From his family life though his public campaign, you can see Jesus' organization developing. In the Nazareth home, those siblings allowed to attend school instructed



"The Second Mile" collage.

those who were not. As he prepared to leave them, he not only trained his brother James to assume the reins of the family, but trained James to train Joseph who would assume the leadership role in a few years. Those in the lead guide those who are one step behind, who in turn guide another, who guide another. You see this later in his public career. Jesus trained the apostles to be his ambassadors on this world. And together they trained the disciples and they trained the messengers and they trained the throngs. And the throngs trained their neighbors and their brothers and their sisters and their children, and through this method the message of Jesus spread throughout the world. This epochal "telephone game" probably had a different name in the days of Jesus, but in the universe this method of teaching is referred to as the Revelation of the Father to His Children.

These good acts reveal much about the mission of Jesus, but his attitude is revealed not by master plans, but by the way he lived his everyday life. You see the Second Mile as Jesus and Ganid helped a lost child find his home. As Jesus repeatedly stepped in to retain an attacker; as Jesus interrupted a public address to properly greet a friend; as Jesus washed the feet of his apostles. The Second Mile is service for its own sake. Because someone needs help; because service is its own reward; because this is life. There is no system of reward and punishment, only progressive evolution, or not.

So get this: when a Planetary Prince embarks for his world of service he usually takes with him a staff of ascending sons and daughters to assist him in the first dispensation of his work. These morontial beings are chosen from those not yet fused with their Adjuster. Now we know that fusion is possible even during a single mortal lifetime, so these volunteers are not spiritually developed too far beyond where you or I currently sit, but they volunteer to take leave of their Thought Adjusters and go to a primitive world to help establish civilization. The average length of their service? 500,000 years.

An apostle asked Jesus, "Master, what should I do if a stranger forced me to carry his pack for a mile?" Jesus responded, in part, "If you can think of nothing more effectively positive to do, you can at least carry the pack a second mile" [1770:7]. The prince's staff carried the pack for three hundred thousand

years. Because service is its own reward; because there is a job to be done and it requires a pre-fusion mortal; because you're available; because you have an eternity (literally) of service ahead of you, so why not start off with three hundred thousand years helping a world start from scratch?

Take the myth of Sisyphus. Sisyphus has angered the Gods, and so they have doomed him. For all eternity, he will take a boulder and push, lift, strain to carry this boulder from the valley to the peak of a hill. When he reaches the peak, the rock tumbles down, and Sisyphus chases it, just to push it up again. The lesson, I suppose, is not to anger the Gods. Albert Camus, the Algerian philosopher and novelist, sees Sisyphus not as a doomed man but as a hero to those who want to live in the moment, whatever that moment is. Camus argues that too often we long for time to pass quickly, because we do not want to be living in this particular moment. While standing in a slow line. While sitting through a boring lecture. The traffic jam; the waiting room; the dentist's chair. But wanting time to end is the same as wanting life to end. Rejecting the moment is like embracing death.

Camus pictures Sisyphus and does not see a man doomed to hating time and longing for it to pass. Sisyphus is smiling. There is a job to do, and he is able to do it because this is life.

If the task of embracing the dentist's chair seems a tall order, fear not, you're in good company. One of the hardest lessons for the apostles to learn was to let go of expectations for the future and embrace the task at hand. When they first gathered and had each chosen to embrace Jesus as their master, they had steep expectations of what was to shortly follow. Peter, speaking for the twelve, made bold to ask, "Master, we come at the behest of our associates to inquire whether the time is not now ripe to enter into the kingdom. And will you proclaim the kingdom at Capernaum, or are we to move on to Jerusalem? And when shall we learn, each of us, the positions we are to occupy with you in the establishment of the kingdom—" [1543:4]. Their answer? For six months they alternated every two weeks between personal one-on-one ministry and manual labor. They needed funds to survive, so they stopped and fished. During their entire public career, Matthew, the treasurer, was empowered to stop all public work and send them back to their nets.

Think of John the Baptist. He was a man raised with the expectation of greatness. He spent years studying the scriptures trying to deduce the proper actions to take.

It is our generation's task to transform duty into service, compulsion into devotion.

Then one day, he began preaching, and with the preaching came the baptisms. He still entertained expectations for the days ahead, but his immediate concern was for the person in front of him in the river. So focused was he on the task at hand that he did not recognize that Jesus had come to join him until they stood together in the water. Jesus submitted to baptism and then came the voice and suspense filled the air.

It's like in a scary movie when the girl is about to open the door, and watch out! because the music is really climactic and watch out! don't do it! Oh, no, she's opening

the door! And then Jesus, without saying a word, turns around and walks away and is not heard from again for forty days. John's response? The next day he went back to baptizing. Weeks later Jesus reappeared, joined the camp for a day or two, spoke with a few folks, pilfered a couple of apostles, and then walked off. John's response? The next day he goes back to baptizing. And that's it for John. Six months later he'll be in prison, two years later he'll be dead. Any expectations he had for himself and Jesus were not destined to come around. But John was able to focus upon the task at hand. Today we baptize, tomorrow will take care of itself.

Readers of *The Urantia Book* are impressed, rightfully so, with our destiny as a civilization and as individuals. Light and life—that sounds nice. Finaliter—I'm not really sure what that entails, but I look forward to the lessons. The path to these goals is not just the actions we take, but the attitude we take them with. We talk of "first generation" and "second generation" and "third generation Urantia Book readers," but the universe views all of us today, readers or not, and countless generations to follow, as a single Epochal Generation. It is our generation's task to transform duty into service, compulsion into devotion. A Planetary Prince transforms a world's culture, an Adam and Eve transform a world's biology, and our Epochal Generation is charged with transforming the world's attitude.

We can make no distinction between the life of Jesus and the teachings of Jesus. Jesus truly lived a revelation. Similarly, the Fifth Epochal Revelation is not a book, but the teachings within, which when taken to heart, will transform a life and spread from person to person faster than words can be read from a page. Jesus said, "We proclaim a message of good news which is infectious in its transforming power" [1766:6]. A Melchizedek tells us, "Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious" [1098:3].

So yeah. I want to be a reversion director. Serving on the staff of a Planetary Prince would be an honor. But today I must work. Tomorrow is a study group, and a friend's birthday. Not sure about the day after yet. I'm pretty sure it will come.

History is written not by the victors, but by the storytellers. Here on our world, we tell stories with words, with music, with dance, with paint and clay and metal and earth. The masses come and the masses go, and maybe they came to hear Jesus and recognized the doors to the kingdom and entered, or maybe they expected miracles and turned away. But they remember the parable. The story sticks with them, like a post-it note for the soul. The reversion directors tell their stories through the means available to them. But a story does not need to be just told, it can be lived. An individual life can become the memorable story that defines an epoch and writes history. Van once signed up for a half million year job, because service is its own reward, but his attitude and service became the legend of Van the Steadfast, the recital of which entertains the universe, and energizes us for the miles ahead. ■

Is It Down Here that We Want to be Born Again?

SEPPO KANERVA
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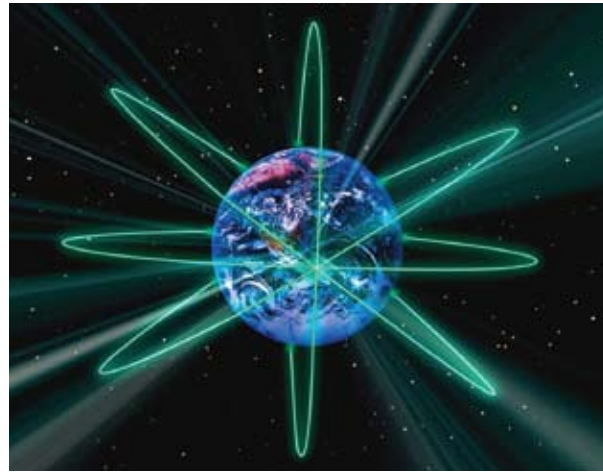
[Reprinted from a 1989 issue of the Finnish *Urantia* Publication, *Heijaste*]

IN THE PREVIOUS ISSUE OF HEIJASTE A philosophic question was raised: Is there any truth in reincarnation? Let us, for a while, assume the position of a fellow reader who gives an affirmative answer to that question. He tries desperately to find something in *The Urantia Book* that would sustain the doctrine of reincarnation, viz. the doctrine which asserts that man is born again and again into this world. Many of us find it strange and odd that some of our fellows seem to be spell bound by such a tenet. And we ask: Why should there be any truth in it? What makes this doctrine so enthralling while reality is much more enthralling? Could the explanation be the fact that parapsychological and occult literature describes a few astonishing cases which seem to support this doctrine; cases that do not appear to find any direct explanation in our book? We who do reject the doctrine of reincarnation put our trust in the teachings of *The Urantia Book* and remain reassured that a solution will one day be found to those phenomena which today appear inexplicable. We regard the doctrines of reincarnation, the karma law and the transmigration of the soul as untrue ideas as such, but we admit that they hold a seed of truth.

Any man with survival status will undeniably be “born again;” firstly, he or she may, while still on earth, be born again in spirit, and secondly, he or she will some time after death be resurrected on the **mansion** worlds. Even the karma law is truthful in its assertion that causation prevails in the universe. The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, which claims that the human soul will after death inhabit another living being, is as such fully untrue, yet, our soul will after death truly be invested in a new body, a morontia body, and as we progress in our universe career, we shall occupy a great number of successive bodies, each body being ever more of spirit.

So I am now going to assume the role of a firm believer in, and a vindicator of, the doctrine of reincarnation.

Even if I am a little bit afraid that the passages in *The Urantia Book* which refer to reincarnation and to the tenet of transmigration, will reveal a negative view on such doctrines, to the effect that they will be



“Reincarnation” collage.

considered untruthful, I’ll attack the problem, and the first observation I make is that these passages are quite few in number:

About the orange race it is told that it was especially given to belief in transmigration and reincarnation. Some later-day races believed that man died three to seven times, which was a residual of the teachings of Adam about the **mansion** worlds [953:5]

About Spornagia, who are soul-less and non-personal, it is said that they are the only **creatures** in all the universe of Nebadon who experience this or any other sort of reincarnation [528:2-3].

Could this passage offer a loophole through which reincarnation slips in? The word *creature* is used in this context where it is said that spornagia are the **only** “creatures,” yet man is no “creature,” which sounds almost like “beast.” Man is man, and “creature” cannot be a designation for man. But Holy Gosh! In reading more of the book, I observe that this word, creature, has been used 560 times, and 557 of these cases refer to personal beings, and almost invariably to human beings. No support from those quarters!

Fetishism may impinge on the idea of reincarnation, whenever the fetish of any tribe is an animal and a ghost is permanently resident therein [967:6].

As to Hinduism, we are told that its undue concentration on self led to a fear of the perpetuation of self in an endless round of incarnations as man, beast, or weeds. About the belief in transmigrations, it is stated that this idea was a stultifying doctrine which robbed mortals of their hope of finding deliverance and spiritual advancement [1029:1].

A statement on the Brahmanic priesthood says that they rejected the teachings of personal religion through the personal faith experience with the one God and became contaminated with the flood of debasing cults, with their doctrines of anthropomorphisms and reincarnations [1029:3].

About Gautama Buddha we are told i.e. that he made a valiant fight against the time-honoured belief in transmigration of the soul [1035:3].

About Ganid, the Indian, we are told that he, as a result of Jesus' instructions, never again entertained belief in the transmigration of the souls of men into the bodies of animals [1431:2].

A statement is made about Plato, Philo, and many of the Essenes to the effect that they did not reject the theory that men may reap in one incarnation what they have shown in a previous existence. *Thus in one life they were believed to be expiating the sins committed in preceding lives. The Master found it difficult to make men believe that their souls had not had previous existences* [1811:5].

These excerpts clearly give no support to the doctrine of reincarnations. I have to confess that the very opposite is the case: they speak against such a belief.

Paper 112, Personality Survival, and Paper 47, The Seven Mansion Worlds, discuss, to the extent these issues can be clarified for us, the problem of our survival after death. These papers make use of terms

...Ganid, the Indian, we are told that he, as a result of Jesus' instructions, never again entertained belief in the transmigration of the souls of men into the bodies of animals [1431:2].

such as "personality," "identity," "self," "individuality," "mind," "memory," "factors of personality," "mind matrix," and "soul." In Paper 47 they seem to say that the body and the mind disintegrate at death, but that a copy of the mortal mind will be made, and this transcript, the spirit factors of mind, memory and personality remain for ever as part of the

Adjuster. The mind-matrix and the passive potentials of identity reside in the soul, which, upon death, remains in the possession of the Guardian Seraphim. And then there is this terse statement: *And it is the reuniting of the morontia-soul trust of the seraphim and the spirit-mind trust of the Adjuster that reassembles creature personality and constitutes resurrection of a sleeping survivor* [533:1]. *The real and conscious reassembly of actual and complete personality takes place in the resurrection halls of mansonia number one* [533:4]. Upon reading these statements, I cannot escape the impression that at least the self, individuality, soul, and identity are not born again on this sphere.

But let us not give up. We still have the entity of **personality**—that entity which is so elusive to all attempts of definition! What if the truth is that personality is born again here? Umm, here seems to be a loophole for the doctrine of reincarnation to slip in. I just need to ignore what I just read about the reassembly of personality on mansonia number one; after all there was a qualification there: they speak about the **conscious** reassembly on the mansion worlds, and my cherished doctrine presupposes an unconscious reincarnation!

They say about personality that this concept is difficult to define; it is *one of the unsolved mysteries of the universes* [70:3]. But in Paper 112 they say: *While it would be presumptuous to attempt the definition of personality, it may prove helpful to recount some of the things which are known about personality, whereupon they present a 14 point list on the aspects and attributes of personality* [1225:2]. This 14 point list **does not include any mentioning of the reincarnation of personality**. Should reincarnation of personality be true, it is beyond doubt that it would be a known fact

to the revelator of this paper, the Solitary Messenger, and he would have included it in his list. Unless he was scheming that a thing like that must be kept secret from mankind. But, wouldn't any such scheming make this Solitary Messenger appear a whole lot dishonest? Well, let's go on.

Could I not defend the doctrine of reincarnation by an assertion that reincarnation is needful for personality to develop adequately in order to be prepared for a transition to the next phase of existence? It is evident to me that one of the most essential things in *The Urantia Book* is the emphasis given to the need for us to grow and learn.

But alas! In Paper 112 they repeat three times that personality is **changeless**. Firstly, personality does not come into being through evolution or development, neither does it evolve nor change; it is an unaltered attribute enabling us to be known even on Paradise:

And throughout all of these successive ages and stages of evolutionary growth, there is one part of you that remains absolutely unaltered, and that is personality—permanence in the presence of change [1225:1].

Personality is changeless in the presence of change. [1225:9].

The Adjuster and the personality are changeless [1226:3].

Personality is basically changeless; that which changes—grows—is the moral character [1572:7].

Once personality is changeless, it cannot be true that it, because of the need for it to change, should be born here again and again. Hence, it seems that this idea fails to serve as a vindication for the idea of reincarnation.

But I do not give up that easily. The authors seem, in Paper 112, to discuss the dimensions of finite personality, and these are length, vertical depth, and breadth. Considering the adverse circumstances on earth, it must be that these dimensions cannot evolve in the course of one single life-time. In other words, for them to evolve, more than one life-time is necessary. Paper 5, though, states that personality is not a progressive achievement; there either is personality or there is no personality [70:4]. And in closer reading, does Paper 112 after all speak anything about personality evolution? The dimensions of personality are inherent in personality; they do not evolve or eventuate; there is no need to be born again for them to evolve. *Personality has a perfected range of cosmic dimensional performance. The dimensions of finite personality are three...* [1226:9]. They say: "personality **has**" and "the dimensions **are**"; they do not say that the dimensions evolve. Again in Paper 47, a statement is made that no growth takes place between death and resurrection: *On mansion world number one (or another in case of advanced status) you will resume your intellectual training and spiritual development at the exact level whereon they were interrupted by death... You begin over there right where you leave off down here.* [533:6]. In other words, further growth takes place over there, not down here. On **morontia** level all of those dimensions are greatly enhanced [1227:1], while on morontia level we

are also in other respects provided with supramaterial endowments: the seat of personality identity (individuality) is transferred from the transitional material-intellect system to the higher morontia-soul system, which, as associated with the Adjuster, is created as a new vehicle for personality manifestation [1232:5-1233:0].

So, my reasoning did not do it.

But let me go on with my reasonings so to solve this problem once and for all. What if, after all, personality is born again down here. **Personality** is, as we noted earlier, an unsolved mystery. Among other things, they tell us that personality is a gift from God the Father. Personality presupposes mind (or spirit), and it is associated with self-consciousness, but mindedness is not the same as personality. The Foreword recounts about personality that it is neither body, mind, nor spirit [9:1]. Personality is quality and value in cosmic reality [70:4]. Personality is devoid of identity (independent existence, individuality), but it unifies all activities and imparts the qualities of identity and creativity [1225:7; 1227:9]. It is noted further that personality is “unique, absolutely unique” [1225:12]. About **selfhood, individuality**, this statement is made: “In the human organism the summation of its parts constitutes selfhood—individuality—but such a process has nothing whatever to do with personality, which is the unifier of all these factors as related to cosmic realities” [1227:8]. Man’s personality is eternal but with regard to **identity**, separate existence, it is a conditioned eternal reality; man must choose whether or not he or she wants to be an eternal reality and identity; should man choose not to be an eternal identity, personality does, even in such a case, attain Deity by becoming a part of the Supreme Being [1232:3].

Once we, at death, are divested of our mind and identity, which constitute the prerequisites of personality, I have no choice but to admit that the idea of a personality reincarnation finds no corroboration even here! This becomes ever more evident if we remember that the Adjuster and the personality are changeless, but that their relationship, **in the soul**, is nothing but change, never ending evolution and development. There is even a statement which says that should this change, viz. **growth**, cease, the soul would cease. [112.0.15]. Of the soul also a statement is made that it is our **morontia self** [1226:3]. And the soul is the prerequisite of our survival: *Personality identity survives in and by the survival of the soul* [195:9]. Hence, I may conclude that my personality does not survive without the survival of my soul. At death, thus, the functioning of the human personality is disrupted. The soul is the child of the human personality and the divine Adjuster. The soul is fully unconscious during the period from death to repersonalization and is in the keeping of the **seraphic destiny guardian**; there is no personal consciousness during this season of waiting [1234:1-3]; there is no exhibition of personality or communication with other personalities [1230:5]. *Between the time of planetary death or translation and resurrection on the mansion world, mortal man gains absolutely nothing aside from experiencing the fact of survival* [533:6].

The surviving soul, the prerequisite of the perpetuation of personality-identity, is in the custody of the guardian seraphim. The Thought Adjuster, again, returns temporarily to Divinington, their Paradise satellite, **and never does a Thought Adjuster return to earth as the being of former indwelling** [1230:5]. But during this journey of a few moments to Divinington

the Universal Censors are able to gain possession of an epitome of the human life as it is embodied in the Adjuster’s duplicate transcription of the spiritual values and morontia meanings of the indwelt mind. The Censors are able to appropriate the Adjuster’s version of the deceased human’s survival character and spiritual qualities, and all this data, together with the seraphic records, is available for presentation at the time of the adjudication of the individual concerned [1231:2].

On the basis of this data, a decision is reached whether this personality will be immediately resurrected on the **mansionian morontia worlds** or only later, at a dispensational resurrection, or whether he or she will not be resurrected at all [1231:2]. But mercy and grace are dominant in the universe of universes:

if, through no fault of your own, the accidents of time and the handicaps of material existence prevent your mastering these levels on your native planet, if your intentions and desires are of survival value, there are issued the decrees of probation extension. You will be afforded additional time in which to prove yourself. If ever there is doubt as to the advisability of advancing a human identity to the mansion worlds, the universe governments invariably rule in the personal interests of that individual; they unhesitatingly advance such a soul to the status of a transitional being, while they continue their observations of the emerging morontia intent and spiritual purpose... This does not mean that human beings are to enjoy a second opportunity in the face of the rejection of a first, not at all... [1233:2-1233:5].

Man’s personality is eternal but with regard to identity, separate existence, it is a conditioned eternal reality; man must choose whether or not he or she wants to be an eternal reality and identity...

This passage of text does not lend itself to a misinterpretation: this merciful measure of granting a human being the right to make up his mind later, means that he will be resurrected on the mansion worlds, it does not mean that he would be born again on earth.

I have no choice but to admit that even this idea of earthly circumstances jeopardising the survival of some and necessitating a second, a third and possibly more lives fails to prove the needfulness of reincarnations.

Paper 112 also states that **the whereabouts of mortal personality during the time intervening between death and survival is not known** [1234:4]. Thus, should it through some incomprehensible means be possible for a personality devoid of identity to be born again, the Solitary Messenger, who is the supplier of the piece of information above, would certainly know about such a repersonalization, which means that he would know of the whereabouts of the personality, unless we presume that the Solitary Messenger is withholding the

truth from us. I regret, but I have to make the confession that once again a justification for the idea of reincarnation has been turned down.

There is no way out from the fact that resurrection or **repersonalization**, takes place on the mansion worlds, not on the native planet. *And it is the reunion of the Adjuster and the soul that reassembles the surviving personality, that reconsciousizes you at the time of the morontia awakening* [1230:3]. The details of this process are revealed in Paper 112, passages 1234:5-1235:1.

All along this process there seems to remain no opportunity, or no need, for any reincarnation. Should such a rebirth be possible, one might ask: Is it a punishment or a reward?

I have already made the observation that the Thought Adjuster, after the death of its mortal subject, returns to Divinington, and we are explicitly told that this Adjuster never returns to the same planet. Hence, it cannot return to indwell the mind of the same per-

sonality. I must therefore conclude that a reborn personality, if such personalities existed, should each time, with each new reincarnation, be endowed with a new Adjuster, and this Adjuster would then, with the personality, develop a new soul again. Finally, with this same personality would be associated as many Adjusters and as many souls as there have been

rebirths. When at last, after all these numerous rebirths, this personality would be reassembled in the resurrection halls of mansonia, which one of the many souls and the many Adjusters would be present? With which of the Adjusters would finally the fusion take place? Which one of the Adjusters would gain personality through this human being? I have to admit that these are confusing questions! Even the angels of heaven would be unable to unravel that mess!

But I am persistent, I am not going to reject the doctrine of reincarnation easily; I invoke what *The Urantia Book* has to say about the seven psychic circles [1209:1-1212:1]. It must be quite evident that an attainment of these circles is impossible during one single life-time on earth; it must be that many lives are needed for such an achievement. These circles depict the various stages in the realisation of the **individual** potentials in human personality (from the seventh to the first circle); i.e. they depict cosmic levels. They can be mastered, either entirely or partially, even when still on earth. *The attainment of these cosmic circles will become a part of the ascenders' experience on the mansion worlds if they fail of such achievement before natural death* [1211:1]. So, a knock-out again! One needs no rebirth in order to attain these circles; one may attain them in morontia should one have failed to do so down here.

But now I recall that the book recounts about people whose destiny is not that of a fusion with their Adjusters—the Adjusters indwelling them only for a short period. It must be that mercy would then require that these people are given a chance to live another life on earth. In Paper 40, which discusses the Ascending Sons

of God, there is, however, a statement on these mortals, who are just temporarily Adjuster-indwelt, that they fuse with the Spirit, while it is of course expected that they will survive their short first life in the flesh: *When such sleeping survivors are repersonalized on the mansion worlds, the place of the departed Adjuster is filled by an individualization of the spirit of the Divine Minister, the representative of the Infinite Spirit in the local universe concerned. This spirit infusion constitutes these surviving creatures Spirit-fused mortals* [450:5]. So again, a statement that they are repersonalized on the mansion worlds; again, no corroboration for any pre-history of “many, many lives.”

But hello, hello! Here it finally is, in Paper 112, which discusses a transaction on the borderland of the physical and morontia realms, a transaction that we are incapable of fully comprehending. This “transaction” has to be the rebirth! On the other hand, I must frankly say that *The Urantia Book* revelation is quite clear in its view that there is no and that there cannot be any rebirth or reincarnation. This incomprehensible transaction must then be something other than a rebirth; what diabolical culty could there be for us to comprehend a rebirth?

But nevertheless, if I, irrespective of all the evidence that speaks against it, if I still want to find this enthralling doctrine of rebirth true and claim that the authors of *The Urantia Book* do not want to reveal this truth and fact in fear of giving reason for people to regard the book as occult or Satanic; such a label and libel would prevent Christians from accepting it. On the other hand again, one might look upon the situation so that *The Urantia Book* does make an account on a rebirth, a reincarnation much more intriguing and gracious: on the spiritual resurrection and life after death, first in morontia, then in absonity, and finally in co-absoluteness and perfection. In the light of all this revelation, the time-honoured doctrine on reincarnation, transmigration of the soul and the karma law, turn pale indeed. Also, I feel a little bit funny in thinking that the revelators and authors of *The Urantia Book*, who otherwise have not balked at revealing even sickening facts and striking truths, would suddenly have become shy in facing such a paling doctrine. It does not sound true.

Neither does it sound true that the authors and revelators of the book would not have full confidence in the power of truth and in its attractiveness, something they would do should they hide the truth just because those who entertain error would not accept it. As to Satan, I venture to say that he would hardly have any objections against such a rationing of truth, nor would he protest against the distortion of truth by any doctrines of reincarnation and transmigration.

I have no choice but to state that the tenet of reincarnation is fully untrue. My sole consolation is that I have not been told not to doubt the teachings and information contained in *The Urantia Book*. *Jesus loved even honest doubters* [1561:6]. ■

In the light of all this revelation, the time-honoured doctrine on reincarnation, transmigration of the soul and the karma law, turn pale indeed.

Personal Growth and Mansion World Arrival

WILLIAM SALDER, JR.
USA

William Sadler, Jr., better known as Bill, was a gifted student of The Urantia Book who also had a talent for distilling its most complex teachings into conversational language. Some of his informal talks were recorded and this article was developed from a transcript of such a presentation to a study group sometime within the period of 1958 and 1959. He also authored A Study of the Master Universe and its Appendices.

There's a lot of things we should do down here that would make us more human. And I suspect that we are sufficiently slothful not to do many of them. And we may still survive. We'll survive with qualifications. I think the nearest to the pain of purgatory will be experienced by those of us who are slothful, and who have to do up there some corrective things which we should have done down here.

Now, let us reason by analogy. When a baby is born into the world, it is assumed that it has absolutely no control over its plumbing. And we provide diapers, and all that sort of thing. But it's also assumed that the child, at a reasonably early age, will get a valve built in there—you know—so that he is able to control his plumbing equipment. As long as that happens, nobody thinks anything of it. There is a period when bedwetting is expected and normal and perfectly natural—it is childlike. I have a friend of mine who has a son who went to college, and he carried this habit into the fraternity house. And can you imagine his mortification?

Now, I think many of us are going to wind up on the first mansion world and others as spiritual bedwetters. And I think our humiliation will be even deeper there than the social humiliation of my friend's son.

As I started to say, the book does teach that if survival is attained, all other losses can be retrieved. Jesus lived and taught in a way that illuminates that. He did not ask the same of everyone. That is why I refuse to sit in judgment on anyone, because I do not really know the gut of that person. He sent the Alpheus twins back to their nets, and promised them they were going to survive.

He made it pretty tough for Simon Peter. In fact, he put Simon Peter through a pretty horrible experience to vaccinate him, because Peter's vacillating tendency was fatal to the future. He put Peter through great pain. And then, after getting Peter mad, he said, "Peter, be a good shepherd. Feed my sheep."

He pointed out that, of the teacher, more is expected than of the pupil; of the master, more than of the servant. Jesus taught two levels of ethics—two distinct levels of ethics. To the believer, he said to love your neighbor as yourself. To

those who would attempt to represent him in the world, he said that you must love men as I have loved men, and these are your credentials. He did not expect all men to love with Father-like affection. He was willing to settle for fraternal affection—that being the minimum ethic. The maximum ethic is Father-like.

I think that any human being who is failing to try to live up to his capacities is gambling with non-survival. This is my personal opinion. I do not think any human being has to achieve his capacities, because it says that Abraham believed faintly, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Maybe that's as much as old Abe could do right then.

But I can only tell you how I feel. I don't sit in judgment on you folks. If I fail to try to do my best, I am not so sure that I will make it. I do not believe I can sit on my dead duke and count on God's love to pull me through. That is not a childlike faith; that is childish presumption.

And just remember, you cannot sit in judgment on the sincerity of another human being. This is folly, as well as darn near sinful. There's only one person I can sit in judgment on—that's Bill Sadler. And you would be amazed if you knew how harsh a judgment that was.

That is up to each one of you folks. You must own your own hook, and there is no magic formula, except this: of the teacher more is expected than of the pupil. The parable of the five talents is a good example.

That is why Jesus made the paradoxical statement. Peter had been talking about the straight and narrow way, and the broad path that leadeth unto destruction—the old primrose freeway. Jesus commented on Peter's teaching and said, it was not without merit. Then he said that the doorway to survival is indeed a narrow one, but that it is also wide enough to accommodate anyone who really wants to make it, because, *I am that door.*

You see, I think for the little guy, the doorway is big. And for the big guy, the doorway is small. I do not feel discouraged about this survival business, but I sure do not feel smug. I feel thoroughly challenged. That is my feeling because the price of my survival is going to be to jump across that parallel bar just about as high as I can jump. They're not going to set the bar low for me, I don't believe. This much intellectual conceit I have. I am afraid the bar's going to be pretty high for me.

I am running extremely challenged—not scared, but very challenged. That is my reaction. And if somebody else feels very comfortable and secure in the love of God, by golly, I'm not so sure that won't work for them. It won't work for me. I am glad they have some very wonderful beings who decide such cases, who can look inside a person's heart. I am glad the Thought Adjuster gives testimony. And I always remember they say, in case of doubt, we always advance the creature. But I am going to try to not use my grace period of thirty days on survival.

You superimpose on a real mammalian critter a spark of infinity—I do not think anyone this side of God would have the courage to do that. The indwelling of the Adjuster, to me, testifies to God's originality and to God's amazing courage.

Stop and think: We are the farthest out. We are the lowest on the totem pole. There is nothing below us which can know God. And yet, he has given us a part of himself, something which I would expect him to do to folks that were way up on topside. And yet, he does not indwell them. He does not even indwell our near of kin, unless they have done time, so to speak. The Adams usually have to serve on a world. The secondary midwayers wait a long time to get this. And yet, it is our birthright. Isn't it amazing?

We who are the very lowest should have the closest spiritual relationship to God—something which even a Lanonandek Son does not have. He is not indwelt by the Universal Father. A Solitary Messenger, in speaking of Adjusters, says, *No one, no one wouldn't but delight to be host to a Thought Adjuster.*

This thing is hard to understand. It is hard for me to understand how Jesus got here. The author of the paper dealing with the worlds of the Father says that the evolution of the immortal soul, its fusion with the Adjuster, and the making of these two antipathal creatures one being is a great mystery to us. Now, he says, *obviously it is not a great mystery to you, because all of Ascendington is open to you.* But there is a sector of Ascendington that is forever closed to me. And he said furthermore, *It is interesting to observe that you never tell us how this happened. I do not know that you cannot; I only know that you do not.*

This Thought Adjuster, like personality, has got the potential for all future time in it. This is a gas tank that, for all practical intents and purposes, is spiritually bottomless. This Thought Adjuster is a fragment of the First Source and Center on pre-personal levels.

In talking about Adjusters, we have this pre-personal function of the Father, or of God—of Deity. How can you say pre-personal, and then use the word Father in the same sentence? I would speculate that this is the level at which Adjusters are fragmented because, remember, all of these are present. When this happened, this did not stop—it just went right on. All of these things happened, and yet the preceding thing continued in existence.

[When] talking about God, remember that God is still pre-personal, God is also personal, and the best super-personal function I can think of God is the Trinity. It is not a person. It is beyond personality. But that does not mean he has stopped being a person simply because he is pre and post. God exists before personality, as personality, and after personality.

There are three aspects of God as a sub-absolute being. One is personality, and the other two are related to personality, before and after. They never speak of the Adjuster as non-personal, or sub-personal. Tiglath is sub-personal. The Adjuster is pre-personal. The Adjuster, while not a person, has full capacity to achieve personality, to receive personality, either through fusion or in his own name and right. (And if I must use a pronoun, I've got to use the word "he" for a Thought Adjuster. I can't use the word "it." But technically, maybe "it" is better than "he." "It" violates my feelings. Perhaps "them" is best.)

I would be inclined to derive Adjusters at this level because the Adjuster seems to operate in relation to Paradise circuits just as well as to the circuits of the Eternal Son. When the Adjuster travels, he travels on a circuit. We think of the Adjuster as a spiritual entity. But the Adjuster doesn't choose to travel on the spirit-gravity circuits of the Eternal Son. The Adjuster elects to travel on the material circuits of the Isle of Paradise, because the Adjuster stems from a level which is antecedent to both the Son and Paradise. He's just as much at home operating over the Paradise circuits as he is over spiritual circuits. The Adjuster is a part of the incomprehensibility of the First Source and Center at this level.

I assume he could travel on a spiritual plane. I assume for some reason the Paradise circuits are just more convenient for him. And that's why I derive him from this level, a level which is conceptually antecedent to the Son and to Paradise. He centered physical gravity in the Isle of Paradise. He centered spiritual gravity in the Eternal Son. Mind gravity is inherent in

the Infinite Spirit. But personality gravity, or the personality circuit, centers in the Universal Father.

There are four realities: mind, matter, spirit, and personality. Personality differs from the other three in that the three have quantity as well as quality, but personality has quality only. That's why personality, the most potent of the three, is so dependable.

If you want to think of personality, let's think of the abstract color yellow. Don't think of a yellow anything, just think of yellow. Can you feel that abstraction in your mind? All right. That's what we're talking about when we're talking about personality as such, alone, isolated. It can't register, because you cannot have yellow, you can only have a yellow something. Am I right?

You cannot have personality alone. You can only have personality if it's got a life vehicle to color. And given a life vehicle, it dominates that life vehicle. It determines the color of that vehicle.

Personality Gravity is noncomputable. We recognize the circuit, but we cannot measure either qualitative or quantitative realities responsive thereto. [133:2]

So, to me, personality, as I find it convenient to think about it, is quality, pure quality. Non-quantity. When I think of a color all by itself, it's like thinking of personality all by itself. In actuality, you can't have it. You've got to have a something which is that color. And, similarly, something has to have that personality.

When death disassembles a human being, the body oxidizes, eventually. The mind ceases to be an individuation. I symbolize that in my mind by seeing the seven Adjutants which are working in each of our cortexes. I think of a rope which has a loop. That loop symbolizes a human mind, and when that person dies, I think they pull the rope out straight. There's no loop any more.

In other words, the circuit is there, but my individualized portion of the circuit is gone when I die.

My soul and seraphim group are personal, takes that into custody. The Adjuster goes back to Divinington and stands by. The personality—the Archangels have taken the fingerprints of personality. They can identify it again, but they have no custody of it, merely a record. They can be sure it's the same person.

For example, let's kill Bud [person in the audience] oħ. He won't mind.

When they get ready to reassemble Bud, the seraphim arrives in the resurrection hall on the first mansion world. The proper technicians go over to the quartermaster department, and say, we would like one "general issue" body suitable for an ex-sodium chloride life pattern emerging from a sphere having these co-ordinates. Then they go on and give them the physical type on Urantia: He's a mid-breather, he operated at such and such a thermal level, the electrical potential of the planet was such and such; in other words, they give him a body he'll feel at home in, see? A suit that fits.

I think these differences diminish as you go up the mansion worlds, but on the first mansion worlds it's very important that you get something you'll feel right in. So they take this general issue body, and they lay it down on a slab—I think of a marble slab. This thing looks like a morgue to me, because—reasoning by analogy—that's where we leħ here, and that's where we take oħ up there. The seraphim plunks Bud's soul in the appropriate upper end of this forked body. I think it'll look very human. It's got legs, hands, and what

not. If they wake me up too different, it'll frighten me, you know? We've got to be gentle.

At this point, I think he's the right size for Bud. He's a normal sized adult, not a baby, just as Jesus was adult in his morontia body.

So the seraphim plunks Bud's soul down in his brain, I think of it as some sort of morontia cortex. This is almost a physical body. You could break a leg. It is just technically not physical. They get a morontia mind circuit. They get an electrician in there with this mind circuit, and they throw the loop in there, see?

The Thought Adjuster has returned. He takes up his position in the citadel of the mind. And then, personality reaches out and seizes this mind circuit. And that's the return of consciousness. They go over and they take the fingerprint of the personality, and the archangels can testify that this is the same guy, Bud, who made it, God knows how. We're all surprised, didn't expect him. This shows the Father's love, passes all understanding.

Now, where personality is during this span, no one knows. No one knows.

If we woke up with the physical body of a secondary midwayer, it would be a profound shock. It would be a traumatic experience. A midwayer is a living electrical pattern—a secondary midwayer. A completely physical being. Here, let's analyze out what is the true human part of man. It's his nervous system. Now, have you ever seen a picture of a human nervous system? All right. Visualize that apart from the corporeal body, somehow endowed with the ability to hang together without the body.

Now you're trying to visualize the physical body of a secondary midwayer. He's an electrical pattern. You see, a secondary midwayer is a human being minus all mammalian factors, best symbolized by the fact that he has none of the mammalian adjutants but the top two adjutants. Worship and wisdom function in the mind of a secondary midwayer.

Back to our example, in Bud's soul, there are two living factors. There are three factors that persist. The soul, the Adjuster, and personality.

The soul, from a functional standpoint, has two kinds of memory. As far as the soul is concerned, it's one kind. All these tapes which Bud has been cutting, and which are registered electrically probably in the cortex, have been re-taped on the soul level. Not all of them. All the significant ones have. And some of those have been re-taped on the Adjuster level.

For example: Bud might have an experience which is morally significant but not spiritually significant. I'm sure that the soul would tape an experience of moral significance, because it's super-animal. But we're told that morality is sub-spiritual, so I don't think the Adjuster would tape it. You get the difference?

I don't think the soul would tape the spinal-reflex memories involved in tying a bowknot in shoe laces. You follow me. I'm trying to get a feeling for selectivity.

This means that when Bud wakes up there, to the extent that the Adjuster has taped things, that immediately activates the corresponding tapes on the level of the soul. So the morontia consciousness is in immediate possession of that fraction of memory. Some memory is completely gone. I think it would be a damned nuisance to retain it—tying shoelaces symbolizes that.

This leaves the inactive tapes at the soul level. They can be activated. There are two ways in which, I think, they're activated.

Number one: Bud bumps into Ruth up there, and they're reminiscing. They had a common experience, which was of moral and ethical significance to Bud, but of spiritual to Ruth—for whatever reason. And as they get into this point of renaissance, Ruth starts talking about this episode, and Bud says, now wait a minute, say that again? And as she repeats that episode, it activates this tape. And a feeling of reality and emotional fact is attached to it as Bud hears this tape activated in his own memory, and from then on, it's an active tape. Ruth resurrected it.

I think there's one other way—your seraphim can tell you a lot of stories, too, you know.

There's another way in which this happens. And this is the most mysterious of all. Personality, I think, can in some way, in some degree, activate these dormant tapes. Bud is walking down some morontia promenade. And all of a sudden, he'll stop, and you will turn around. I think this is a common miracle, you know? In other words, it's an ordinary thing, but no one can explain it. You can't explain something that's miraculous, like human conception—a common miracle—and divine incarnation, an uncommon miracle.

All of a sudden, he'll stop, and you'll turn around. He didn't know you'd gotten there. He hasn't been down there checking over new arrivals, see? And in each of your memories will be activated a remembrance of who you are in relation to each other. You were friends down here and knew about the blue book together.

We're told that we will remember personal relationships. We're told that the relationships between personalities is always an end, never a means. It has final value. Little by little, I think, in the course of a hundred years, a thousand years, ten thousand years, I think all of the significant dormant tapes we have will be reactivated. Even that which is dormant in terms of concrete memory still functions in terms of character, and I would describe character as the pattern of the soul, containing all of the beauty and all of the ugliness which characterizes the souls of each of us at the moment of death. All of the good work we've done, and all of the unfinished business goes on over there.

Our weaknesses persist. Remember? They inventory them. Equivocation, procrastination, unfairness, ease-seeking, problem avoidance. Our actions will be unethical and sub-moral to the extent that these deficiencies persist. Our actions will be ethical and moral and excellent to the extent that we have developed sound character down here. The early decisions of the morontia soul, or the personality working at the level of the soul, are largely determined by the character momentum persisting from this life into the next life.

You almost might borrow a Buddhist term. You might say our karma persists. Causality, continuity. The Buddhists are awfully close to the truth there. I don't like their end objective, which is nothingness, but the notion that your unfinished business goes on is quite sound. The papers validate that. Only, they don't validate a circularity of reincarnation. It's a linear thing, leading from here to Paradise.

Thus, Bud will not come back, be transported, say, through a Thought Adjuster to someone else. Bud will be himself. You know the Buddhist concept of karma is good here. Bud's actions will be—he will begin working out his karma on the first mansion world. I never used that word in this connection before, but it's a good one. Yes, there is no Christian theological word that expresses it. In the Christian concept, you're purged, or you burn. The Buddhist concept is much better. You pick up your package where you left it and start on the same journey. ■

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