

2 Salisbury Crt, Glen Waverley, Victoria, AUSTRALIA, 3150.

A NOTE FROM 6-0-6

We like to welcome you all back after our annual holiday season and hope to find you in good health and spirits, ready to face a new year of challenges in your universe careers.

Six-O-Six is entering its 10th year of publication. With your support we can make it another year of sharing news on the URANTIA movement, personal experiences, poetry, scientific discoveries, new insights into the teachings of The URANTIA Book and in general getting to know our family of readers from around the globe a little better.

Over the past year study group activities all over Australia have strengthened. We now have a very steady group in Queensland and New South Wales. In Victoria there are several groups meeting on a regular basis.

If you think you would like to join a study group or if you are travelling interstate, here are some contact numbers:

Sydney: Kathleen & Trevor Swadling (02) 913-7893

Melbourne: Bill MacLean (03) 221-3366 (Ring Bill for information on a worship service, which is being held on every second Sunday morning at the Hawthorn Community House, 39 Williams St. Hawthorn.

Steven Shanahan (03) 592-8690 (Brighton area)

Madeline Noordzy (03) 561-6089 (Glen Waverley area)

Buchan district (Vic): Christopher Billington (051) 55-0225

Canberra district: William Wentworth (0649) 67-139

Yanchep, W.A. : Peter & Sue Webb (09) 561- 1417

Brisbane district: Neil Francey (07) 849-4504

“ thought for the month ”

"All of this magnificent creation, including yourself, was not made just for you. This is not an egocentric universe. The Gods have decreed, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and said your Master Son, "He who would be greatest among you let him be server of all."

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND SPIRITUAL UNITY

INTRODUCTION TALK

by Kathleen Swadling

Although Australia is hosting this meeting, it is our intention that emphasis is placed on interaction. For this reason we decided on the theme "Cultural Diversity & Spiritual Unity". For many years now the URANTIA revelation has seen a great deal of activity in the United States for obvious reasons - the revelation was placed on this world in Chicago - a major centre of trade & commerce. The readership spread from that centre throughout America and in recent times we have seen it spreading further from that country to the very countries all of us here today have come from. The time is coming (or perhaps has come) for the readers of the world to unite in their efforts to spread this 5th Epochal Revelation and to get the invisible brotherhood of Jesus off the ground so that his superb teachings will rule in the hearts of all mankind.

I hold firmly to the belief that transformed individuals will be the key to a transformed world and that The URANTIA Book will play a vital role in the transformation of the individual. The URANTIA Foundation and the URANTIA Brotherhood are the established bodies whose aim is to protect the context of the book and to foster its growth throughout the world. Whenever groups of individuals band together for a common purpose they are bound to have problems because of our inherent imperfect natures. We all well know that our Father created the evolutionary worlds of time and space for a very good reason. It is a part of his ultimate plan to have time-tested, perfected creatures for some future purpose. We should not be too troubled about the fact that we have problems in our dealings with our fellow men for it is the challenge of solving those problems which stimulate our growth and contribute to the emergence of The Supreme Being. If we sincerely seek for the truth in all situations and actively live that truth in our personal lives, we will have a solid foundation to build our universe careers on. I see the URANTIA Brotherhood as the focal point for the planetary movement of the URANTIA revelation. It stands for a body of committed individuals who wish to DO something about transforming the world by fostering the spreading of the teachings in The URANTIA Book, which has the power to speak to the souls of truth-hungry individuals. I find this a worthy commitment and one which I, personally choose to identify with. There are enough warnings in the book to guard against crystallisation and institutionalisation.

True unity of spirit allows for diversity of individuals. The unity of spirit is like the cloth and the diverse individuals are like the threads which weave themselves in the right way to contribute to the finished item. When done in accordance with the will of God, diversity and unity are in-

separable. I'd like to step away from the individual as related to the whole now and look at our national and international status in relation to the planetary goal of the 5th Epochal revelation. How serious are we in our commitment to the 5th Epochal revelation? Do we simply want just to do our own thing with it and not be involved with the social readership or do we want to become organised (a bit like the apostles needing to get their act together) and really work towards getting this thing off the ground. If we wish to band together on an international scale we need to recognise and consider the diversity of the individual cultures. The problems encountered in working with foreign cultures to our own, will probably be far greater than those we face with one another in our own countries. However if we are sincerely focused on our commitment to living out the revelation and working to bring about the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God, then no problem will be insurmountable.

I feel this conference could be quite significant to the growth of the movement in the South Pacific region and should provide an excellent opportunity for the development of international relations. We must strive toward breaking down the national barriers - remember that it is nationalism which has created our worst global conflicts. We need to look beyond our national differences and identify with the spiritual unity. I do not see the URANTIA Brotherhood as an American organisation, but rather as a planetary one which happens to be headquartered in America. As other countries become more involved in the movement it will take on more of an international flavour.

I see that those of us here representing Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Fiji, Hong Kong, France, Great Britain, Switzerland and Finland will have a vital role to play in expanding the horizons of the URANTIA Brotherhood and helping it to become a truly world-wide movement. I hope the gathering this week will help us to gain an understanding of one another and succeed in strengthening the bonds of fellowship between us. I hope and pray that the Father will give us strength and courage to help us to gain an insight into the value of our varying natures and to be wise in putting our understanding into action.

I would like to close with this thought. It is a quote from The URANTIA Book on p. 619:1:

"Families, groups, nations, races, worlds, systems, constellations, and universes are relationships of association which possess individuality; and therefore does every member of any such group, large or small, reap the benefits and suffer the consequences of the rightdoing and the wrongdoing of all other members of the group concerned."

HOW MANY MORTALS SURVIVE

The topic that I am about to present I've called "How Many Mortals Survive". Before proceeding into my presentation, I'd like to say that I have come to no fixed conclusions on this topic, though I must admit that after researching I am now reading certain sections of The URANTIA Book in a different light. Also I'd like to stress that throughout this topic we should keep in the back of our minds that :

1. Free will is involved.
2. That the mystery and love and mercy of the Father of all souls prevails.
3. That the basis of my topic is founded on things that are not fully revealed.
4. That we don't fully understand the possible shifts and differences of time from our world to the Mansion worlds and beyond.

The passages that I quote from The URANTIA Book, we should treat as facts but knowing that these facts are arranged in a way that support this topic. Some of the facts are partial and therefore the picture is fully open to conjecture. Also there may very well be other facts concealed within the book, that I and others have possibly overlooked, that could render the presentation invalid. But even so, if this presentation succeeds to stimulate thought and further deeper study of The URANTIA Book, then I feel that it has served its purpose. So with this in mind I will get on with it.

Not long before I read a passage in The URANTIA Book that started me thinking about the survival rate of mortals. I was watching one of a series of programmes of "The World Around Us". How many of us have watched those nature shows on T.V. like "The World Around Us" or Jacques Cousteau's, that show us in beautiful detail the habits and instincts of our animal cousins. The one I was watching was about the breeding habits and survival rate of the giant tortoise of the Pacific Islands. On how it lays hundreds of eggs instinctively knowing that only a handful will survive to perpetuate the species. Now, if we look at the lower forms of life on our planet they tend to have a greater number of offspring to ensure their survival. Then if we look at the scale of intelligence, broadly simplified, offspring tend to diminish in numbers in accordance with intellectual capacity. This seems to be a common thread and pattern to the evolution of life. Then if we look on the flip side of the coin and take a broad look at the cosmology presented in The URANTIA Papers, generally speaking, those beings who are spiritually higher on the scale, the fewer the numbers, the less chance of error or insurrection, compared with those beings who draw nearer to us, who can and do default. For if we read on page 393:6

"Our local universe has been unfortunate in that over seven hundred Sons of the Lanonandek order have rebelled against the universe government, thus precipitating confusion in several systems and on numerous planets. Of this entire number

of failures only three were System Sovereigns; practically all of these Sons belonged to the second and third orders, Planetary Princes and tertiary Lanonandeks.

The large number of these Sons who have lapsed from integrity does not indicate any fault in creatorship. They could have been made divinely perfect, but they were so created that they might better understand, and draw near to, the evolutionary creatures dwelling on the worlds of time and space."

And if we turn to page 608:4 it reads:

"The greatest loss occurred in the angelic ranks, but most of the lower orders of intelligence were involved in disloyalty. Of the 681,217 Material Sons lost in Satania, ninety-five per cent were casualties of the Lucifer rebellion. Large numbers of midway creatures were lost on those individual planets whose Planetary Princes joined the Lucifer cause."

Now let's leave this aside and get back to the passage I read in The URANTIA Book that started me thinking about the survival rate of mortals. Starting at the bottom of p.608 I read: "It was over two years of system time from the beginning of the 'war in heaven' until the installation of Lucifer's successor. But at last the new Sovereign came, landing on the sea of glass with his staff. I was among the reserves mobilized on Edentia by Gabriel, and I well remember the first message of Lanaforge to the Constellation Father of Norlatiadek. It read: 'Not a single Jerusem citizen was lost. Every ascendant mortal survived the fiery trial and emerged from the crucial test triumphant and altogether victorious.' And on to Salvington, Uversa, and Paradise went this message of assurance that the survival experience of mortal ascension is the greatest security against rebellion and the surest safeguard against sin. This noble Jerusem band of faithful mortals numbered just 187,432,811".

The following day, after reading this paper on the Lucifer rebellion and contemplating the repercussions on our world, it suddenly struck me that this number of 187 million Jerusem citizens seemed incredibly small. This number seemed to conflict with my preconceptions of the survival rate of mortals, for on page 1233:3 it reads:

"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. Thus divine justice is certain of achievement, and divine mercy is accorded further opportunity for extending its ministry .

The governments of Orvonton and Nebadon do not claim absolute perfection for the detail working of the universal plan of mortal repersonalization, but they do claim to, and actually do, manifest patience, tolerance, understanding, and merciful sympathy. We had rather assume the risk of a system

rebellion than to court the hazard of depriving one struggling mortal from any evolutionary world of the eternal joy of pursuing the ascending career.

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. But it does signify that all will creatures are to experience one true opportunity to make one undoubted, self-conscious, and final choice. The sovereign Judges of the universes will not deprive any being of personality status who has not finally and fully made the eternal choice; the soul of man must and will be given full and ample opportunity to reveal its true intent and real purpose."

So then I set out trying to resolve what I felt to be a conflict. I wanted to disprove that this figure of 187 million indicates that only a small percentage of mortals actually survive. My first search was to find out what is meant by Jerusem citizenship. If we read page 540:1: "Seven times do those mortals who pass through the entire mansonia career experience the adjustment sleep and the resurrection awakening. But the last resurrection hall, the final awakening chamber, was left behind on the seventh mansion world. No more will a form-change necessitate the lapse of consciousness or a break in the continuity of personal memory."

Then on page 538:8: "Now begins the formation of classes for graduation to Jerusem. You have gone from world to world as individuals, but now you prepare to depart for Jerusem in groups.... The personnel of the seventh mansonia assemble on the sea of glass to witness your departure for Jerusem with residential status. Hundreds or thousands of times you may have visited Jerusem, but always as a guest; never before have you proceeded toward the system capital in the company of a group of your fellows who were bidding an eternal farewell to the whole mansonia career as ascending mortals. You will soon be welcomed on the receiving field of the headquarters world as Jerusem citizens."

Now we know through our reading of the paper on 'The Seven Mansion Worlds' that it implies that quite a length of time is involved in traversing these spheres and also our stay on Jerusem is of considerable length. Although they don't give us any figures on how long it takes to traverse the mansion worlds they do tell us that John the Baptist traversed the Mansion worlds and is a Jerusem citizen serving on the council of twenty-four. So we definitely know he made it in less than 2000 years, although his experiences were very different, as were his circumstances, to the average ascender. The statement on page 558:1 drives the point home that we don't get there overnight: "The mortal-survival plan has a practical and serviceable objective; you are not the recipients of all this divine labour and painstaking training only that you may survive just to enjoy endless bliss and eternal ease. There is a goal of transcendent service concealed beyond the horizon of the present universe age. If the Gods designed merely to take you on one long and eternal joy excursion, they certainly

would not so largely turn the whole universe into one vast and intricate practical training school, requisition a substantial part of the celestial creation as teachers and instructors, and then spend ages upon ages piloting you, one by one, through this gigantic universe school of experiential training. The furtherance of the scheme of mortal progression seems to be one of the chief businesses of the present organized universe, and the majority of innumerable orders of created intelligences are either directly or indirectly engaged in advancing some phase of this progressive perfection plan.

In traversing the ascending scale of living existence from mortal man to the Deity embrace, you actually live the very life of every possible phase and stage of perfected creature existence within the limits of the present universe age."

Now leaving that aside, let's see if we can have a look at some numbers of population. Possibly we can work out, roughly, how many mortals were around at the time of the Lucifer rebellion. On page 741:1 it tells us that there were almost half a billion mortals living on Urantia at the time. If we turn to page 559:3 they give us some information that we could use to get a rough idea on the population in Satania: "Satania itself is an unfinished system containing only 619 inhabited worlds. Such planets are numbered serially in accordance with their registration as inhabited worlds, as worlds inhabited by will creatures. Thus was Urantia given the number 606 of Satania, meaning the 606th world in this local system on which the long evolutionary life process culminated in the appearance of human beings. There are thirty-six uninhabited planets nearing the life-endowment stage, and several are now being made ready for the Life Carriers. There are nearly two hundred spheres which are evolving so as to be ready for life implantation within the next few million years.

Not all planets are suited to harbour mortal life. Small ones having a high rate of axial revolution are wholly unsuited for life habitats. In several of the physical systems of Satania the planets revolving around the central sun are too large for habitation, their great mass occasioning oppressive gravity. Many of these enormous spheres have these satellites, sometimes half a dozen or more, and these moons are often in size very near that of Urantia, so that they are almost ideal for habitation.

The oldest inhabited world of Satania, world number one, is Anova, one of the forty-four satellites revolving around an enormous dark planet but exposed to the differential light of three neighbouring suns. Anova is in an advanced stage of civilization."

Now we know that at the time of the Lucifer rebellion there were definitely 606 inhabited planets. Knowing that our planet is the 606th out of the 619, pointing out that we are quite recent, from this I think we could safely use half a billion for the population of each planet in Satania, and

let's make our number of planets 600. I feel we could be fairly safe with this figure. Before we can calculate any numbers, the next question that comes to mind is just how many Jerusem citizens are actually resident on Jerusem at any one time; how many must be off on assignments. On page 742:4 we are told that at the time of the selection for the 100 of Prince Caligastia's staff, 785,000 ascendent mortals on Jerusem volunteered. However these 100 chosen were unfused ascendent mortals and were provisional citizens. We are not given many figures on assignments, although one author does refer to the mansion worlds as detention spheres and that Jerusem citizens are confined to the local universe. Another author informs us that student visitors come out from our superuniverse capital, Uversa.

Now let's assume that the figure of 187 million is 1% of Jerusem citizens while the other 99% is on assignments. Now using these conservative figures that were previously given - half a billion each planet, 600 planets, one generation - equals 300 billion with 99% on assignment, we end up with a survival rate of 6.23%. Take it over 12 generations we get a survival rate of .5%. If we put all the other planets aside and just take our planet with its present population of 5 billion and we halve this number, then grab a calculator and work out a period of 12 generations - a mere 300 years - you would end up with $2.5 \text{ billion} \times 12 = 30 \text{ billion} - 62.3\%$. Then let's calculate over a thousand year period, much shorter than a dispensation, the figure would come to 840 billion which would give us a survival rate of 2.2%. If somebody had the time and the analytical mind for maths, possibly they could come close to working out the survival rate of mortals within a fixed slot of time, although I assume the survival rate would increase, depending on the advancement of each individual planet to the era of light and life and at some stage would stabilize. Also the survival rate on the 582 worlds that did not fall completely in the Lucifer rebellion might be greater.

Because of the long intensive training, perhaps in conclusion, I may make one suggestion that possibly of the trillions upon trillions of souls, only a small percentage of them actually make it to Jerusem. In other words, at some time between this life, the first mansion world and Jerusem, possibly large numbers of souls actually choose not to continue with their ascension career. I would like to finish off with two readings from The URANTIA Papers page 361:1 :

"The farther down the scale of life we go, the more difficult it becomes to locate, with the eye of faith, the invisible Father. The lower creatures - and sometimes even the higher personalities - find it difficult always to envisage the Universal Father in his Creator Sons. And so, pending the time of their spiritual exaltation, when perfection of development will enable them to see God in person, they grow weary in progression, entertain spiritual doubts, stumble into confusion, and thus isolate themselves from the progressive spiritual aims of their time and universe. In this way

they lose their ability to see the Father when beholding the Creator Son. The surest safeguard for the creature throughout the long struggle to attain the Father, during this time when inherent conditions make such attainment impossible, is tenaciously to hold on to the truth-fact of the Father's presence in his Sons. Literally and figuratively, spiritually and personally, the Father and the Sons are one. It is a fact: He who has seen a Creator Son has seen the Father."

And on page 64:3 : "Mortal man may draw near God and may repeatedly forsake the divine will so long as the power of choice remains. Man's final doom is not sealed until he has lost the power to choose the Father's will. There is never a closure of the Father's heart to the need and the petition of his children. Only do his offspring close their hearts forever to the Father's drawing power when they finally and forever lose the desire to do his divine will - to know him and to be like him. Likewise is man's eternal destiny assured when Adjuster fusion proclaims to the universe that such an ascender has made the final and irrevocable choice to live the Father's will."

Trevor Swadling, Sydney

As presented at the South Pacific Regional Meeting of Readers of The URANTIA Book, October 1988 at Robertson, N.S.W.

REQUEST FOR PRAYER

Please join me in urgent prayer for the trustees of the URANTIA Foundation; for their health and wholeness, strength and clarity.

May their work reflect the Father's way. Let their association be of light and grace. May they be filled with His Love.

Let the scars and wounds of past fends and conflicts be healed. Let our movement be united in spirit although diverse in style. Let all the world know us by our love,

Martin Greenhut

A bell is not a bell until you ring it
A song is not a song until you sing it
Love was not put in your heart to stay
Love is not love until you give it away

Oscar Hammerstein
(the day before he passed on)

NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND

I will just write down a few lines for your newsletter and hope that I can express something of the sense of satisfaction we New Zealanders experienced at the conference, the better now, for having participated, and the ongoing harvest of feelings of association which have matured, not only with Australians, but with other nationalities who were present at the conference.

All of the New Zealanders who attended the South Pacific Meeting agreed that it was a success. We appreciated the relaxed approach in the time table which allowed for such adjustments as inevitably resulted from rescheduling so many activities over four days. It is to be hoped that we New Zealanders can match such an effort in the future, should we host such a broadly based South Pacific conference. True to its theme, we certainly had a unity in cultural diversity.

The Auckland study group had its third weekly meeting since the conference in November. The first week was informal in style owing to so many of our members being absent for different reasons. We were able to have a good post-conference chat. The second week our group got down to study after some earlier mulling over photographs taken at the conference, which indeed still does not fail to generate for us, hours of post study reversion by way of conversation. As we settle down to our routine we are increasingly being reminded of our duties here in New Zealand and are becoming aware, as a result of the conference, of those things which make up our concern. Post-conference 'Highs' have their place, but already things are moving, changes are taking place, there is work to be done.

The Auckland study group has just received a consignment of URANTIA Books which were pre-ordered from the Asoka Foundation Inc, Oklahoma. We keep a stock of books, like most groups, which we use for a variety of purposes: library placement, new reading group developments, loan or private use, etc.

We have just recently heard of a new and encouraging development in the Hamilton region of New Zealand. Hamilton is a moderately large city some 127 km from Auckland, and is now the centre for a new study group. This Hamilton group, I am informed, has six new readers and is to some extent an offshoot development of the Taupiri reading group, though should be considered to be a new group in its own right. We, at Auckland are in contact with these regions and are working in conjunction with the Taupiri group to see what we can do to meet the needs of this new group. Some books are being prepared for supply as reading URANTIA Books.

Dennis Clampitt, Auckland, New Zealand

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

It was really a great experience to meet all the people who gathered in the sole purpose to work for our Father. Nicole and I thank you and your friends from the deepest of our hearts to have made this meeting possible and to have organized it in this beautiful manner. We returned home full of gratitude and joy to have found so many wonderful friends. In Melbourne, Steve Shanahan did his best to bring us together with other readers, so we truly experienced Australia from inside!

We are always very interested in the 6-0-6 Newsletter; its spirit is very good - very Australian - I think after our short stay - I mean very future-directed, enthusiastic and profound. Our good old Europe needs such qualities very much!

Here is a brief summary of what I said at the conference.

Wherever people speak neither English nor French the language barrier is the great obstacle in spreading the Urantia message. In Switzerland there are 4 official languages: French, German, Italian and Romansch. Therefore the only existing study group (20 members) is to be found in the French part.

Swiss people as a whole have more and more concentrated their efforts on material progress. The result is a kind of material paradise where everything functions, providing for the inhabitants a feeling of security. A developed sense of the beautiful accompanies the general and equally distributed wealth. But the large religious organisations have become empty mechanisms. True believers are increasingly meeting in little groups or sects. Still we are persuaded that under the surface of this apparent spiritual desert a religious spring is preparing. We need new men and women like the medieval Swiss statesman and deep thinker Niklaus von der Flüe who left this touching prayer:

My Father,

Take away from me everything that hinders me to You
Give me everything that brings me closer to You
Take me from myself and give me to You, totally.

Urs Ruchti, Uetliburg, Switzerland

The rays of the candle's flame are clear and beautiful as they travel on and out into space.

So shall your words be those of peace and harmony as they go forth on their vibratory journey down the ages.

BLACK HOLES AND NEUTRON STARS

A thimbleful of matter from a neutron star would weigh about 100 million tons. For a black hole, the weight would be infinitely greater. It is not surprising that, until recently, astronomers regarded such fanciful objects as the play toys of theoretical physicists. Then, in the mid-1960's, the discovery of mysterious stellar objects, the pulsars and the quasars, completely changed the picture.

Dark bodies having gravitational pull such that light could not escape were predicted on theoretical grounds about 200 years ago by Michell and also by the French mathematician Laplace. The theory was based on Newton's corpuscular theory years later, Maxwell's wave theory of light put an end to such speculation at least until Newton's description of gravity was replaced by that of Einstein in the early part of this century. Einstein's theory allowed that light waves could be trapped by gravity, but the concept of Laplace's dark bodies remained a play toy for theoretical physicists until the discovery of pulsars and quasars using radio-telescopes. These strange objects appeared to have extraordinary large mass relative to their small size, an observation that forced the refocussing of attention upon speculative objects such as neutron stars and Laplace's dark bodies.

In 1968 the name "dark body", was replaced with "black hole". The URANTIA Book naturally uses the old terminology. Current theory has it that the source of novas and supernovas is the gravitational collapse of spent stars. For stars near the mass of our sun, the final result is the formation of a white dwarf with density such that a thimbleful would weigh about 10 tons. For stars more than about 5 times the mass of the sun, the result is a neutron star with density 100 million tons per thimble. During the final blast initiating neutron star formation, vast quantities of tiny uncharged particles, the neutrinos, are released. This does not happen during the formation of white dwarfs. For stars with mass greater than about 25 times our sun, the ultimate fate is contraction to a black hole of such enormous density that, once inside, nothing can escape its gravitational grasp.

The formation of a neutron star is clearly being described in The URANTIA Book (p. 464) where it is stated that the gravity collapse of massive stars is accompanied by release of vast numbers of tiny uncharged particles. The mother sphere of the Crab nebula is described as being the remnant of one such gravitational collapse. The existence of the tiny uncharged particles, the neutrinos, was not demonstrated until 1956. The URANTIA Book (p.173) also tells us that some "dark islands of space" are the remains of dead suns, devoid of light and heat, and that their density is "well nigh unbelievable". We now know that the neutron star which is the

mother sphere of the Crab nebula is a pulsar, and that it gives off visible light as well as pulsed radio waves and X-rays. Hence, the "unbelievably dense dark bodies" of The URANTIA Book that are devoid of light and heat cannot be neutron stars, and must be what we now call black holes.

During the 1960's it was realised that the Nordstrom-Reissner (1916) solution to Einstein's equations describing the gravitational field of a static electric charge allowed for a charged black hole, the theory of which was developed by Kerr and Newmann. However, in his book "The Universe" (1985), W. Kaufmann tells us that a black hole is not expected to possess any appreciable electric charge, and that astronomers neglect electric charge when discussing black holes. Kaufmann also tells us that although a black hole can have a tiny electric charge, it cannot have any magnetic field whatsoever. He states that Einstein's equations do not permit a north pole / south pole asymmetry around a black hole.

Quite recently, the idea that a black hole could not be highly charged has been reversed (Price and Thorne, 1988). Highly charged black holes with an immense potential difference at the poles of the order of 10 to the 20th volts, have now been invoked to account for the enormous power output of quasars.

In describing the formation of our solar system, The URANTIA Book (p. 655) tells of the approach of the Angona system, describing its centre as a "dark giant of space, solid, highly charged, and possessing enormous gravity pull". This description now aligns with most recent concepts regarding black holes.

There are many references to black holes in The URANTIA Book as these are used by the Power Directors to ensure gravitational stability for various systems, and for the control of energy flow. At the time of receipt of The URANTIA Papers in 1934, if we had asked a panel of astronomers to estimate the chances that black holes and neutron stars really existed, the answer would have been virtually no chance. To the same question in 1955, the date of publication of The URANTIA Book, the answer would have been at least 100 to one against. In 1988, most astronomers accept the concept that black holes and neutron stars are common place, and even highly charged black holes have gained respectability. Once more, statements that may have been considered incredible and unscientific at the time of receipt of The URANTIA Papers, have now come to coincide with up to date scientific opinion.

Ken Glasziou, Maleny, Qld.

References:

- The URANTIA Book, pp. 464, 173, 655.
- Hoyle and Norliker, "The Physics-Astronomy Frontier" (1980), p. 205. (Freeman & Co.)
- W. Kaufmann, "The Universe" (1985), p.449. (Freeman & Co N.Y.)
- Price and Thorne, Scientific American (1988) 258(4), 45.

IS THE MILKY WAY GALAXY THE SEVENTH SUPERUNIVERSE OF ORVONTON?

This is a question I have been trying to resolve for a long time. I have heard many people interpret the diverse and complex information given about this subject in The URANTIA Book by simply stating that the Milky Way is Orvonton! After many months of study, I still am not convinced of this. Let me explain why.

To set the stage for this investigation, we need to begin by looking at two factors that diminish our ability to conclusively answer the question: the distortion of language, and the limitations of revelation. First, on p.1 the revelators explain their anticipation of problems that will arise because of their instructions to introduce no new terms when English terms were available, even if there might be distortion of meaning. Second, on p.1109 we are informed that they are forbidden to preclude the discoveries of humans by revelation and that many of their physical science statements may need revision in light of scientific progress and discovery. We are admonished not to discard the genuine historical and religious truths when this happens.

We must also understand the times and background of this question to properly search for its answer. It was not until the mid-twenties that scientists began to understand that there was more to the universe than our own galaxy. We knew our galaxy was very large and was made up of individual stars, clusters of stars, illuminated and dark gases, and dust particles; however, we also observed a few fuzzy patches of light that didn't look like stars. The Andromeda spiral was one of these. We called it a nebula and until Edwin Hubble proved otherwise in 1923, we thought it was a small component of our galaxy. Now we know Andromeda is an immense galaxy of its own. It is larger than the Milky Way and a great distance from it. Scientists started referring to systems such as these as island universes. Later, the definition of the term galaxy was changed to include other large star systems outside the Milky Way.

New discoveries are not always readily accepted however, and even at the time of the revelations of The URANTIA Book on this subject, old ideas about the galaxy persisted. A 1936 definition of galaxy is, "An irregular luminous band encircling the heavens appearing as a succession of cloud-like masses of light, cleft at one point into two great branches, but really consisting of numberless stars too small to be seen separately with the naked eye." In the 1980's we understand a galaxy to be: "Any of numerous large-scale aggregates of stars, gas, and dust, containing an average of 100 billion solar masses and ranging in diameter from 1,500 to 300,000 light-years." Current estimates of the number of galaxies is upwards of 100 billion. So it should be understood that science has progressed some since

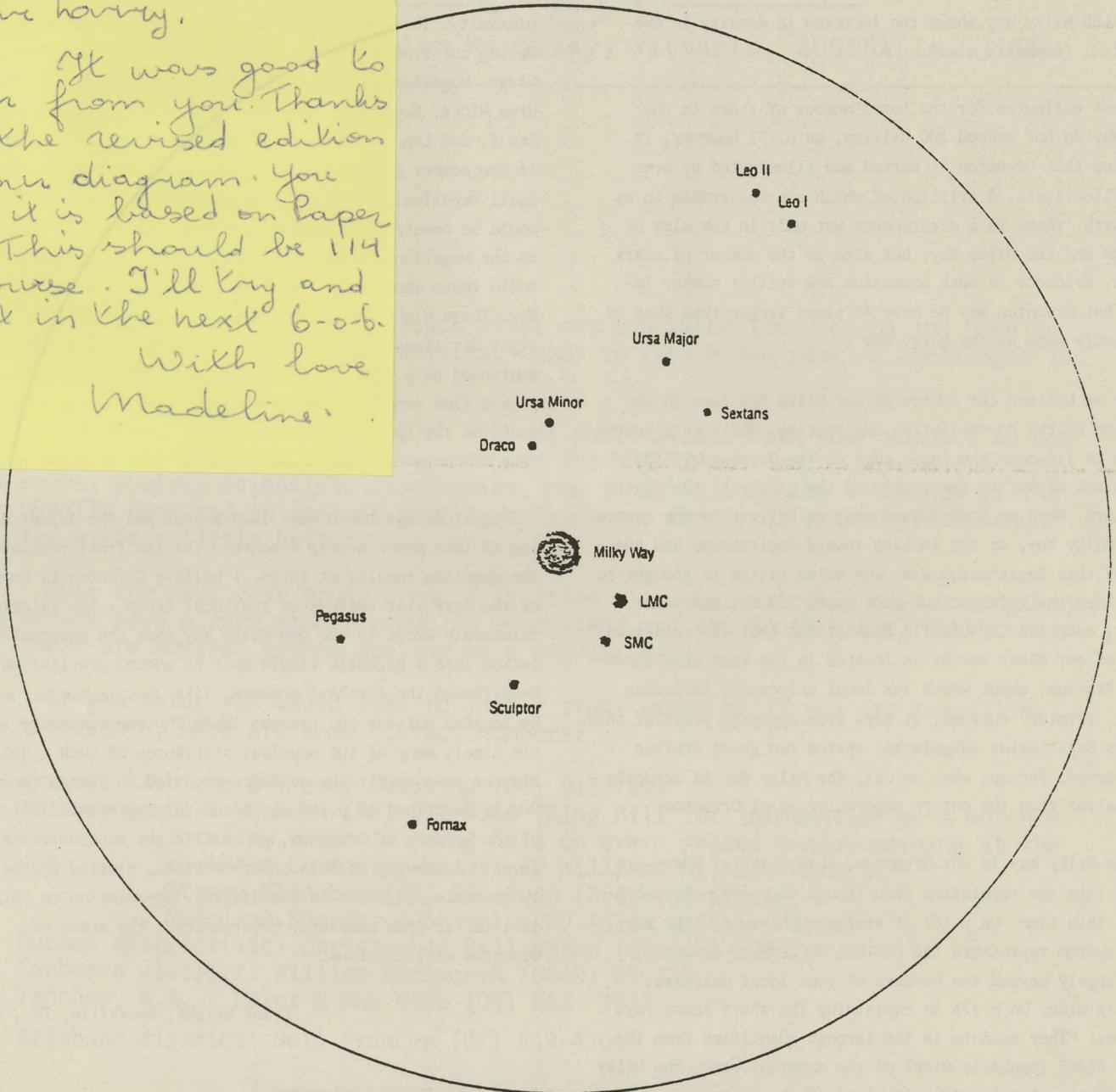
the time of these revelations in 1934-35.

The cosmological terminology used in The URANTIA Book can be misleading. For example, on p.170 it speaks of Andromeda as a nebula external to the inhabited superuniverse. The Andromeda nebula, an antecedent of our local universe of Nebadon and mother to over one million suns, is explained on pp. 651-655. On p.464 a sun is described as a small circular nebula. Then the Crab Nebula, remnants of a supernova of the year 1054, is mentioned. This last usage of nebula is analogous to the modern understanding of this word: "A diffuse mass of interstellar gas and dust." Scientists of today would not think of a star or a galaxy as a nebula. The terms galaxy, universe, and island universe also add to this confusion. On pp. 130-131 we are told that only two or three nebulae outside Orvonton can be seen with the naked eye, but that our telescopes reveal millions of these physical universes being formed. We are instructed that in the future our more powerful telescopes will discover millions of new galaxies, but that many island universes previously thought to be in outer space are really a part of the GALACTIC SYSTEM of Orvonton, (emphasis mine). Finally, on p.167 it calls Orvonton the seventh galaxy and the Milky Way a starry system, while on p.170 it uses the term Milky Way galaxy. It should be noted that the inconsistency and evolution of our own language as well as the progress of science has contributed greatly to the lack of clarity of the revelations of cosmology.

The latest radio astronomy measurements indicate the distance from our solar system to the centre of the Milky Way at about 23 thousand light-years. The entire galaxy is about 100 thousand light-years across. It is seen to be shaped like a flattened circular disk with a bulge at the centre. Surrounded with a spherical halo of older stars and globular clusters, the bulk of matter is contained in at least two gigantic spiral arms extending from the nucleus along a plane a few thousand light-years thick. The URANTIA Book states on pp. 359-360 that from Jerusem, headquarters of the system of Satania, of which Urantia is a member planet, it is over 200 thousand light-years to the physical centre of Orvonton in the dense diameter of the Milky Way. From the outermost system of INHABITED worlds to the centre of the superuniverse is a little less than 250 thousand light years, (emphasis mine). That would make the diameter at least 500 thousand light-years, five times what we currently measure the Milky Way to be. On p.167 it describes Orvonton as being made up of planets, suns, dark islands, double stars, globular clusters, star clouds, spiral and other nebulae, forming a watch-like elongated-circular grouping of about one seventh of the inhabited universes. We can observe the spheres of Orvonton to be traveling in a vast elongated plane whose breadth is far greater than the thickness and the length far greater than the breadth. It goes on to say that observation of the

ORVONTON?

Dear Harry,
 It was good to hear from you. Thanks for the revised edition of your diagram. You say it is based on paper 116. This should be 114 of course. I'll try and fit it in the next 6-o-b. With love Madeline.



The circle marks approximately one million light-years from the Milky Way center

- p. 167:
- Superuniverse ----- 10 major sectors
 - Major sector ----- 100 minor sectors
 - Minor sector --- 100 local universes
 - Local universe -- 100 constellations
 - Constellation ----- 100 systems
 - System ----- approx. 1000 worlds

.../10

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This second Encounter will be held from July 30 to Aug. 6 1989 at Montvillargenne Castle. The theme is: "SERVICE". Enquiries: C.E.R.D.H., 3 bis rue Grande, 77940 Blennes, FRANCE

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SO-CALLED Milky Way shows the increase in density in one direction, (emphasis mine).

Current estimates for the total number of stars in the Milky Way do not exceed 200 billion. On p.172 however, it is stated that Orvonton is warmed and illuminated by over 10 trillion stars, 8 trillion of which are observable to us from Earth. There is a discrepancy not only in the size of Orvonton and the Milky Way, but also in the number of stars therein. Evidence in both dimension and stellar number implies that Orvonton may be over 40 times larger than what we prevalently know as the Milky Way.

Today we believe the centre of our Milky Way lies in the direction of the constellation Sagittarius. While we discern our sun to lie near the inner edge of the Orion spur, the next spiral closer to the centre of the galaxy is the Sagittarius arm. When we look toward what we believe is the centre of the Milky Way, we are looking toward Sagittarius and the flank of this Sagittarius arm. Our solar system is thought to orbit about the galactic hub once every 250 million years. However, on p.168 The URANTIA Book states that the rotational centre of our minor sector is located in the vast star cloud of Sagittarius, about which its local universes, including Nabadon, revolve. Further, it says from opposite sides of this enormous Sagittarius subgalactic system two great stellar coils emerge. Perhaps what we call the Milky Way is actually much smaller than the entire superuniverse of Orvonton.

If the Milky Way is not Orvonton, then what is? There are clues within the revelation even though they are not conclusive at this time. On p.167 it states: "The vast Milky Way starry system represents the CENTRAL NUCLEUS of Orvonton, being largely beyond the borders of your local universe." (emphasis mine) On p.475 in explaining the short space rays it states: "They emanate in the largest quantities from the DENSEST PLANE (emphasis mine) of the superuniverse, the Milky Way, which is also the densest plane of the outer universes." On p.170 it says the Milky Way galaxy is made up of former spiral and other nebulae, some of which maintain their original shapes and some that now resemble gigantic luminous masses of stars, like the Magellanic Cloud. We now understand this Magellanic Cloud to be made up of two satellite galaxies of the Milky Way. They are visible from the southern sky and are believed to be over 150 thousand light-years distant. Together they contain about 20 billion stars. This information could be interpreted to suggest that Orvonton encompasses area and matter from the centre of our galaxy beyond the Magellanic Cloud, a diametric distance close to 500 thousand light-years.

Our galaxy is surrounded by a number of other galaxies collectively known as the Local Group. The central core of this Local Group contains about 12 galaxies in gravitational

proximity. These seem to orbit about the dominant Milky Way. Moving out from the Milky Way at the centre, there is the Large Magellanic Cloud, the Small Magellanic Cloud, Draco, Ursa Minor, Sculptor, Sextans, Ursa Major, Pegasus, Fornax, Leo 1, and Leo 2. Due to their pronounced binary nature, some of the member galaxies, such as The Large Magellanic Cloud and Small Magellanic Cloud, Ursa Minor and Draco, and Leo 1 and 2, could be construed as double galaxies (The URANTIA Book refers to the Magellanic Cloud as a single system, for example). This would leave about eight galactic systems surrounding the Milky Way. These eight associated galactic systems could be the eight divisions of Orvonton identified by our astronomers as mentioned on p.167. The two remaining divisions which we have a hard time separating because of our viewpoint inside them, could be the spiral arms that emanate outward from the central core of our own galaxy.

This study has taken more than a year and the actual drafting of this paper nearly 3 months. Yet the final resolution of the question remains at large. I believe Orvonton is comprised of the core star systems of the Local Group - the galaxies relatively close to our own Milky Way that are apparently locked into a gigantic single unit by mutual gravitation. Even though the furthest members, like Leo or Fornax, might be located outside the present INHABITED superuniverse (emphasis mine), many of the physical attributes of such a galactic cluster seem to fit the evidence revealed. A system resembling this is described on p.169 as "A sun-forming nebula just north of the borders of Orvonton, but within the superuniverse space level." A drawing of this interpretation, plotted approximately to scale, is shown in the diagram. Speculation on this subject is far from complete. Nevertheless, the study of Orvonton will continue.

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Editors note: This interesting article comes from the first edition of a science newsletter to be published by the Knoxville, Tennessee, Fort Saunders Faith Sons students of The URANTIA Book. They feel there is a need to provide a forum for reporting scientific discoveries, interpretations of information revealed in The URANTIA Book, and relationships between the two. The purpose of the newsletter is to promote study of science and The URANTIA Book, to stimulate thought, to help liberate society, to contribute to the refinement and ennoblement of evolutionary religion, to yield knowledge and promote understanding of universal truths, and to examine facts and coordinate reality. Their philosophy is the same as the name they have chosen, the pursuit of wisdom: pp. 806, 909, 1006, 1106, 1135, and 1138.