

**TRANSLATION UPDATES**

**Arabic:** Completed in 1996 and handed over to the Foundation, the work has been undergoing revision ever since.

**Bulgarian:** Work is continuing.

**Chinese:** Since 2000 a team of university professors has been working simultaneously on a modern and a classical Chinese version. One professor has created a special dictionary to ensure accurate translation of UB terminology and concepts.

**Croatian:** Nora Moakher continues her work, funded by members of the Fellowship's Golden Gate Society.

**Estonian:** The first draft was completed in 1999 and final editing is now in progress.

**Farsi:** Since 2000 work has begun in earnest and the team now includes three individuals, one of whom resides in Iran.

**German:** The first draft was completed in 2000 and is now being revised and edited.

**Greek:** In 2000 a Greek translation team of three was formed and authorized to begin work.

**Indonesian:** A husband-and-wife team have translated more than thirty papers into Indonesian.

**Italian:** An acceptable preliminary translation was completed in 1995 and the revisions are now in the final stages.

**Japanese:** A team is currently being formed.

**Lithuanian:** Completed in 2002, the Lithuanian version will soon be making its debut.

**Norwegian:** A part-time effort has been underway but work is slow due to lack of funding.

**Polish:** Almost half the papers have been translated, many of which have been edited at least once.

**Portuguese:** Work has recently begun on a Portuguese translation.

**Romanian:** A team of two, working at the rate of two papers per week, are nearing completion.

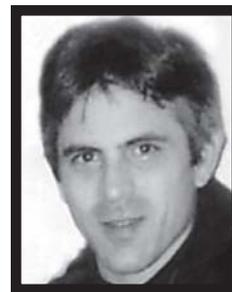
**Swedish:** A team of longtime readers, both Finnish and Swedish, has brought the project close to publication.

For more information visit Urantia Foundation at [www.urantia.org](http://www.urantia.org). ■

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# CONSIDER THE SOURCE

with Matthew Block



**I**N MY twenty-six years with the Urantia Book, I have attended study groups where I've pored and puzzled over many passages with other serious readers. Papers such as the Foreword and "Universe Levels of Reality" are—as we all know—perennially mind-boggling. But many of the more accessible papers contain passages which cause some of us to scratch our head or raise an eyebrow. Some arouse our curiosity by alluding to poets or pharaohs or scientists without naming them; others seem questionable as concerns dates, events or other phenomena. Some are too obscure to really understand.

In my ten years as a source researcher, I've found that the Urantia Book's apparent sources shed light on many of these questions and issues. In comparing a puzzling UB passage with its corresponding source text, I have often found myself saying, "Aha! Now I understand why I had questions about it!"

Are you perplexed by, or curious about, certain statements in the Urantia Book, particularly in Parts III and IV, where sources are used most heavily? If so, send me your question at [mblock@flash.net](mailto:mblock@flash.net), and I'll try to supply you with a source-related answer.

The two questions covered here appeared on the UBRON message board. I've modified the wording for clarity.

## **Bundy's Witty and Worshipful Wordsmithing**



*I'm wondering why the phrase "and not by leadings, voices, visions, and extraordinary religious practices" is inserted into this sentence from p. 2089, referring to Jesus:*

The secret of his unparalleled religious life was this consciousness of the presence of God; and he attained it by intelligent prayer and sincere worship—unbroken communion with God—and not by leadings, voices, visions, or extraordinary religious practices.

*In viewing this in the literary sense, I can think of only two possibilities: (1) He also experienced leadings, voices, visions, and extraordinary religious practices, in addition to "intelligent prayer and sincere worship"; or (2) Others mentioned in the context of this narrative were experiencing voices, visions, and extraordinary religious practices, and this had been a topic of an earlier discussion.*

*Does anyone have a clue why this phrase was inserted?*



Well, to begin with, the entire sentence you quote was adapted from a sentence in Walter E. Bundy's 1928 book, *The Religion of Jesus*. In fact, much of the paper in which the sentence occurs (Paper 196, "The Faith of Jesus") appears to be the product of a consecutive paraphrasing of passages from this book and its 1929 sequel, *Our Recovery of Jesus*.

Bundy's books were apparently chosen by the author of Paper 196 because his concepts and expressions about the faith of Jesus were "on target," or at least congruent enough with the UB's message to serve as a basis for adaptation. Like the UB (see, for instance, p. 1100) Bundy maintains that Jesus was not a mystic or an ecstatic prophet. He distinguishes two modes of religious approach: one that involves visions and voices, and one that involves prayer and worship unaccompanied by extraordinary psychic phenomena. In discussing the religious consciousness of Jesus, Bundy repeatedly points up this distinction, placing Jesus squarely on the non-mystical, non-psychic side. The sentence you cite is adapted from one of Bundy's expressions of the dichotomy. I ►

see why the statement might be curious, since this is the only time in the UB discussion where the opposition is made explicit.

That sentence is the culminating statement of a remarkable paragraph, in which the meaning of prayer for Jesus is laid out in a striking list of features. What makes the passage even more intriguing is that Bundy appears to have provided the basis, which the UB reworks in a creative and critical way.

What follows are the parallels between p. 208 of Bundy’s *The Religion of Jesus* and p. 2094 of the *Urantia Book*. I’ve bolded some of the shared words and underlined significant differences:

The Religion of Jesus

The Urantia Book

On the whole, we may say that

prayer for Jesus meant an **expression of need**,

a release of soul,

a relief of inner pressure,

conquest over severe subjective struggle,

an elevation and **enrichment** of mind,

a reinforcement and refreshment of spirit,

a clarifying of vision,

a freshened functioning of faith,

a whetting of will,

discovery and illumination,

restoration of confidence

and courage,

To him prayer was a sincere **expression of spiritual attitude**,

a declaration of soul loyalty,

a recital of personal devotion, an expression of thanksgiving,

an avoidance of emotional tension,

a prevention of conflict,

an exaltation of intellection,

an ennoblement of desire, a vindication of moral decision,

an **enrichment** of thought,

an invigoration of higher inclinations,

a consecration of impulse,

a clarification of viewpoint,

a declaration of faith,

a transcendental surrender of will,

a sublime assertion of confidence,

a revelation of courage,

increased **consecration**

and **devotion**,

**adjustment** and orientation,

a mobilization of personal powers

to perform, in short, the energy and power by which to live and work (208).

[contd] Even with an increase of clearness and certainty and of personal power to perform, we do not see a diminishing but an intensification of Jesus’ prayer-life. His life ends with an almost awful climax—

the cry to God *de profundis* (208).

**Not in visions and voices,**

**but in prayer and communion with God—**

purely religious sources of light and strength—Jesus learned the divine will and found the personal power to perform it (208).

In comparing the two texts, I’ll touch upon two areas: substance and style.

*Substance:* For Bundy, Jesus is the most religious man who ever lived. Jesus’ religious life is exemplary because he is essentially and

a confession of supreme **devotion**,

the validation of **consecration**,

a technique for the **adjustment** of difficulties,

and the mighty mobilization of the combined soul powers

to withstand all human tendencies toward selfishness, evil, and sin.

He lived just such a life of prayerful consecration to the doing of his Father’s will

and ended his life triumphantly with

just such a prayer.

The secret of his unparalleled religious life was this consciousness of the presence of God;

and he attained it

by intelligent **prayer** and sincere worship—unbroken **communion with God—**

**and not** by leadings, **voices, visions,**

or extraordinary religious practices.

exclusively religious. Bundy maintains that Jesus was not God, nor the Son of God, nor a God-man. His outstanding trait was not self-mastery or perfection of character, nor complete attunement with divinity. Rather, in Bundy's view, Jesus was, throughout his life, prone to the same struggles and weaknesses as the rest of humanity. The excellence of his religious life lay only in his constant and absolute devotion to the will of God as he sought to understand it.

The Urantia Book does not endorse Bundy's understanding of the nature of Jesus, and only partially shares his interpretation of Jesus' spiritual attainment. The deviations in the parallels indicate some of these vital differences. Bundy's descriptives—"need," "release," "relief," "conquest over," "restoration," etc.—point to a Jesus still chronically subject to changing moods and ebbs and flows in faith. The UB deftly replaces these words, to depict Jesus' prayer life as an expression of his triumphant faith and a validation of his self-mastery.

**Style:** In reading the Bundy column, notice his alliterations<sup>1</sup> ("whetting of will," "freshened functioning of faith," etc.). Many of his discussions are speckled with these alliterative touches. On p. 160 he comments, in a compound alliteration: "[Jesus'] **personal piety was prosaic and moral rather than poetic and mystical.**" On p. 194, on Jesus' prayer life, the alliterations flow fast and free:

In these periods of prayer engaged in by Jesus there is nothing to suggest the **typical temper** of the mystic. There are no indications of **mystical mannerisms and methods**, no **seeking for a severing of self**, ... no **effort to effect a mystical merging** with the object of prayer.... No **ecstatic elements**, no **visionary visitations** seem to have invaded these retreats (194).

Bundy's alliterations in the chart above are absent in the Urantia counterpart, but a careful reading of the rest of Paper 196 shows that some of his other ones are retained.

In all my reading I don't recall coming across prose as consistently alliterative as Bundy's, though it is hardly likely that Bundy is the outstanding alliterator in the history of English literature. Nevertheless, I can't help wondering, in reading the following UB passage on the Thought Adjusters, whether Bundy was its inspiration. . . .

These Monitors are **efficient ministers** to the higher phases of men's minds; they are wise and **experienced manipulators** of the spiritual potential of the human intellect. These **heavenly helpers** are dedicated to the stupendous task of guiding you safely inward and upward to the celestial **haven of happiness**. These **tireless toilers** are consecrated to the future personification of the **triumph of divine truth** in your life everlasting. They are the **watchful workers** who pilot the God-conscious human mind away from the **shoals of evil** while expertly guiding the **evolving soul** of man toward the divine harbors of perfection on far-distant and **eternal shores**. The Adjusters are **loving leaders**, your **safe and sure** guides ...; they are the **patient teachers** who so constantly urge their subjects forward in the **paths of progressive perfection**. They are the **careful custodians** of the sublime values of **creature character** (1203).

## Bested by Breasted?

Q

On p. 1045 the Urantia Book says: "The word judgment appears only once in the entire Book of Hebrew Psalms, and that particular psalm was written by an Egyptian."

<sup>1</sup> Alliteration. *n.* the recurrence of the same initial sound (not necessarily letter) in words in close succession, as 'Sing a Song of Sixpence'.

Since the UB doesn't say which Psalm, I was inspired to go to Bible.com and do a word search on the King James Version. I was surprised to find that the word "judgment" occurs 32 times! What gives? Can the Urantia Book be talking about a different translation of the Bible?

**A** When the Urantia Papers were first being received by their American audience in the 1920s and '30s, the two most commonly used versions of the Bible in the United States were the King James Version and the Revised Version. (The latter, published in the late 19th century, was a light revision of the former and should not be confused with the Revised Standard Version in use today.) Theoretically the UB author may be alluding to some other, obscure English translation, but it is highly unlikely that any would use the word 'judgment' just once. And since the word 'judgment' is an English word, it would be absurd to look for it in the Hebrew original or in any non-English translation.

A clue to the UB's intended meaning is found in the sentence which precedes the one in question. It reads: "The concept of judgment in the hereafter for the sins of one's life in the flesh on earth was carried over into Hebrew theology from Egypt."

If we tweak the problematic sentence from "The word judgment appears only once . . ." to "The Egyptian concept of **the judgment** hereafter, appears only once . . .," then we narrow the possibilities down considerably by searching on 'the judgment.'

The phrase 'the judgment' occurs more than once in the King James Version of the Book of Psalms, but only in one Psalm does it refer to the judgment hereafter—Psalm 1. Verses five and six read:

[5] Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in **the judgment**, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

[6] For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Obviously, this way of solving the problem doesn't rely on source consultation. However, the sentence in question and the section in which it appears *do* use an apparent source, and this text does shed light on the Urantia Book's entire discussion of early Egyptian religion. Discovered by Scott Forsythe in the 1980s, the source is *The Dawn of Conscience* (1934), written by James Henry Breasted, a renowned American Egyptologist.

On pp. 365 and 366 of his book, Breasted quotes a long poem by Amenemope and shows its resemblance to passages from the prophet Jeremiah. He goes on to comment: "In contemplating Amenemope's pleasing picture of the two trees, one is inevitably reminded of the first Psalm. . . . It is important to notice that 'the judgment' appearing here [in the first Psalm] is *the only mention of it in the entire Book of Psalms*. This is a significant hint [of Egyptian influence on the Hebrews], for a judgment hereafter, as we have already seen, was the contribution of Egyptian civilization."

But we're still left with questions. Why didn't anyone—the Contact Commission, the Forum—notice the Urantia Book's mistake? And where in the chain of transmission did the mistake occur? Was it the result of a typo, or of a misreading of Breasted?

You be the judge. ■

Note: Both Bundy and Breasted are profiled in the new edition of *Source Authors of the Urantia Book: Papers 85 to 103, and Others*. See p. 61 for ordering details.