

A BIBLICAL EVALUATION OF *THE UB*  
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PART VIII: What Does *The UB* Say about Life After Death?

“There is a long, long road ahead of mortal man before he can consistently and within the realms of possibility ask for safe conduct into the Paradise presence of the Universal Father. Spiritually, man must be translated many times before he can attain a plane that will yield the spiritual vision which will enable him to see even any one of the Seven Master Spirits.”

(5:1.1)

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“And . . . it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment . . . .”

(Hebrews 9:27)

Bless My Soul

*The UB* teaches us that man is not born with a soul. Our soul does not actually exist, nor does it begin to develop, until we have received our Thought Adjuster, which typically occurs just prior to our sixth birthday (108:2.1). It is not until after we die and are “resurrected” on other planets, called morontia worlds (also known as “mansion worlds” or “architectural spheres”), when our soul is “born” and progressively develops thereafter in a prolonged sequence of celestial reincarnations:

“During the mortal life in the flesh the soul is of embryonic estate; it is born (resurrected) in the morontia life and experiences growth through the successive morontia worlds.” (66:4.9)

The Bible, on the other hand, portrays humans as a unified creature made of “spirit, soul, and body” (1Thessalonians 5:23). While *The UB* distinguishes man’s indwelling “spirit” (a.k.a., the “Thought Adjuster”) from man’s “soul,” spirit and soul are spoken of interchangeably throughout Scripture when applied to a single person. Moreover, the Bible portrays man as having a soul upon conception (Genesis 2:7; Exodus 21:22-25; Psalm 139:13-16).

If the reader is wondering what becomes of children under the age of five who die a premature death prior to their receiving a Thought Adjuster, Section 2 of Paper 47 provides the “answer.” On the first transitional world of Jerusem, around which the seven mansion worlds revolve, the local system’s probationary nursery is set aside for such cases. This celestial child care center is staffed by morontia babysitters who rear the infants and toddlers that suffered a premature demise on an evolutionary world. The children are “reassembled” on the transitional world, appearing “as on the nativity world” (45:6.7), except without reproductive organs since there is no procreation beyond the earthly realm. In fact, they are “always personalized as of their exact physical status at the time of death except for reproductive potential” (47:2.2). Apparently, then, these children who tasted death too early on an evolutionary planet are given a “second chance” of existence in a material body. These infant wards of the celestial estate are “awakened” at the exact time that the first of their former biological parents arrives on the first

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mansion world. Thus these children are given the same opportunity to make their choice whether to do the will of the Father as they would have had they lived long enough in their previous life to do so. Thought Adjusters come to indwell their minds at the appropriate age just as it happens on the material worlds. The same opportunity is afforded those children under the age of accountability (which is apparently 16 years) who have Thought Adjusters but who had died prior to making the decision whether to pursue the Paradise career.

No doubt, this offering of a “loophole” is in deference to the perceived “inadequacy” offered in the Bible regarding the fate of children’s souls who die before the age of accountability. But this “solution” is not without inconsistencies. When an Adjusterless child dies, it means that said child was bereft of an individual soul, since the soul is not born and does not begin to evolve until the Thought Adjuster arrives and indwells the host child’s mind. The lifeless child is dependent upon at least one of its parents surviving mortal death and entering the morontia existence on the mansion worlds. A dead child’s fate therefore no longer depends on what they did or decided in their brief lifetime, but on what their parents do in theirs. Not only is this condition inconsistent, it is unfair. What if neither parent survives the mortal existence? It is certainly conceivable that both parents, after having born children, went on or continued to live a life of iniquity until their dying day. As we already know, such parents would not be afforded the opportunity to be resurrected into the morontia existence, their souls having been adjudicated unto certain annihilation by the Ancients of Days. I do not ask this question hypothetically, for history is no doubt full of such examples. According to the testimony provided by the “Brilliant Evening Star,” then, the innocent infants and toddlers of iniquitous parents will never be given the opportunity to make their own free-will choice, will never progress to Paradise, and will never live again, all because they died an untimely death. What rotten luck that would be!

But there is yet another troubling outcome regarding life after death in the case of Adjusterless children. To continue the Evening Star’s brilliant exposition:

“When material life has run its course, if no choice has been made for the ascendant life, or if these children of time definitely decide against the Havona adventure, death automatically terminates their probationary careers. There is no adjudication of such cases; there is no resurrection from such a second death. They simply become as though they had not been.” (47:2.7)

Incredible as it may seem, the celestial author is proclaiming that death (that is, the cessation of physical life) is possible in the hereafter! This revelation brings with it a whole host of sticky theological impositions. For instance, because no alternative explanation is provided for the cause of a soul’s extinction upon the second death, the implied reason is that the person lived a life of iniquity, just as is the case on evolutionary worlds. We must therefore conclude that sin, evil, and iniquity exist on the transition worlds that house probationary nurseries. In other words, so far as Adjusterless children and uncommitted youths are concerned, all must face the specter of death a second time. This prospect would be particularly daunting for those who were killed traumatically, such as being burned alive or drowning. Would such a person be inclined to sign up for the ascension path because they sincerely wanted to do the will of the Father, or because they just did not want to face death again? Would their decision convince the Ancients of Days in light of the fact that the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” are “sincerity, more sincerity, and more sincerity” (39:4.14)? Keep in mind that most children that die do not die a natural death and therefore probably face some degree of trauma in the process.

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I do not mean to be so cavalier about such a morbid subject, but the reader needs to take this and the other related issues into consideration when sizing up the believability of the authors' position regarding the way things are on the other side. The revelators are apparently trying to fill in the "missing gaps" of their own eschatological paradigm in an effort to outdo the Bible. However, they appear to have painted themselves into another theological corner, this time because they disclose too much information in their explanation. Moreover, they brought this conundrum upon themselves after putting forth the notion that a Thought Adjuster invades our minds at the age of five years and some months. This "answer" no doubt evoked many a question during the days of the Forum, producing fires that had to be put out on the spot.

To be sure, the Bible does not provide as detailed an answer as to what happens to those that die prior to what is considered to be the age of accountability, at which time they are held accountable for the decisions that they make. Many believe that the statement made by Jesus says it all: **"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven"** (Matthew 19:14). In other words, children below a certain age are considered innocent and automatic candidates for heaven.

### The Big Sleep

*The UB* tells us that the dead are unconscious between death and their "resurrection," which does not occur on earth, but on the "mansion worlds":

"All mortals of survival status . . . pass through the portals of natural death and . . . personalize on the mansion worlds. . . . The passing of time is of no moment to sleeping mortals; they are wholly unconscious and oblivious to the length of their rest. On reassembly of personality at the end of an age, those who have slept five thousand years will react no differently than those who have rested five days." (30:4.4,5)

The doctrine that the dead, whether righteous or unrighteous, are unconscious between death and the resurrection is traditionally called "soul sleep." It means no one is punished nor consciously in the presence of the Lord until the resurrection. It bears notice that this is a key doctrine of Seventh-Day Adventism and that William Sadler, Wilfred Kellogg, and their wives (four of the six members of the "Contact Commission" who allegedly were witnesses to the sessions of the "sleeping subject" through whom *The UB* was allegedly channeled) were former Adventists. *The UB* adds a Gnostic twist to the Adventist doctrine in that its "resurrections" occur on other planets (the "mansion worlds").

Contrary to this view, several biblical passages indicate that humans are conscious after death. The unjust dead are kept by God "for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment" (2Peter 2:9; NIV). This is also apparent in Jesus' parable of the unregenerate rich man (Luke 16:19-31). By contrast, Christians anticipate that when they are "absent from the body" (that is, disembodied), they are "present with the Lord" (2Corinthians 5:8), and that even at death, separated from "the body" they are present "with Christ" (Philippians 1:22-23). The book of Revelation shows the martyrs of the Tribulation period, not yet resurrected, in communion with and rewarded by God (Revelation 6:9-11). Finally, Jesus stated to the thief on the cross next to Him that **"today you will be with Me in**

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**Paradise’** (Luke 23:43). Jesus would have had no reason to inform the thief that he would be in His presence on the other side if he, being asleep, could not have been conscious to enjoy the moment!

### Cosmic Reincarnation

*The UB* reveals to us that man is rewarded after death with living out multiple lives on other planets, each life with an increasing level of spiritual advancement, the ultimate goal of which is to be united or “fused” with our “Thought Adjuster”:

“The evolutionary planets are the spheres of human origin, the initial worlds of the ascending mortal career. Urantia is your starting point; here you and your divine Thought Adjuster are joined in temporary union. You have been endowed with a perfect guide; therefore, if you will sincerely run the race of time and gain the final goal of faith, the reward of the ages shall be yours; you will be eternally united with your indwelling Adjuster. Then will begin your real life, the ascending life, to which your present mortal state is but the vestibule. Then will begin your exalted and progressive mission as finaliters in the eternity which stretches out before you.”  
(112:0.1)

Although *The UB* does not proclaim the doctrine of terrestrial reincarnation that is typical of eastern religions (but in fact denies it), it does teach that there are multiple lives on different worlds for people to “ascend” ever onward toward the Paradise Trinity and Havona. We even see Jesus of *The UB* endorsing such a scheme when he refers to life on earth as “this first life of the long Paradise ascent” (148:6.7). The attraction of reincarnation is that it provides a person with ample time to work out their “salvation” (i.e., self-perfection), even if they don’t quite get it right during their first few lifetimes. The Bible, however, teaches that there is only one life or opportunity for humankind for repentance (Hebrews 9:27). After death, one is sent either to Hades to await the judgment of God (Luke 16:22 ff.; Hebrews 10:27; Jude 7) or to the presence of the Lord Jesus (Philippians 2:21-23). The Bible makes no allowances for living multiple lives in different worlds.

*The UB* describes “a long, long road” that is required of mortals to gain the presence of the Universal Father in Paradise. The Paradise of *The UB* is the location of the central universe (Havona) and can only be reached after hundreds of lives, which are to be lived out on several successive levels of “architectural spheres.” In order to remain internally consistent with itself, though, *The UB* must revise the scene at the crucifixion such that the thief on the cross did not go directly and immediately to Paradise:

“And then Jesus said, ‘Verily, verily, I say to you today, you shall sometime be with me in Paradise.’” (187:4.1)

Adding the word “sometime” provides the decisive (if not obvious) blow and in effect settles the issue once and for all, at least so far as the celestial revisionists are concerned! But the issue is not so settled as it may seem. Jesus of Nebadon’s headquarters is officially located on Salvington, the capital world of Nebadon, his “local universe” realm of the Milky Way Galaxy (i.e., the superuniverse known as “Orvonton”), where he spends the vast majority of his time. He is known to spend some of his time visiting various locations within Nebadon, and even journeys often to Uversa, the capital world of Orvonton. It is only “periodically” that he “journeys to Paradise” (33:2.5). On the other hand,

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ascending mortals (such as the thief on the cross), upon finally achieving the seventh and final level of ascension known as “Paradise,” are soon thereafter put through one last training course prior to their being sent off on assignment to “the ends of the far-flung creation” (30:4.25). Therefore, neither Jesus of Nebadon nor the thief on the cross is likely to spend much time in “Paradise,” and the odds of the two crossing paths therein is remote at best. Moreover, if they were to cross paths, the sanctified thief would not be “with” Jesus in Paradise as the passage states, for they would both be attending to their appurtenant duties independent of one another prior to their departure therefrom. It also goes without saying that the sanctified thief would meet up with Jesus of Nebadon on Salvington well before he reached Paradise, which is in fact one of the stopgap stations along the arduous cosmic path toward Paradise for ascending mortals. It would therefore have been more appropriate for Jesus of *The UB* to have said that the two would meet in Salvington, or simply that they would soon see one another on the other side. Nevertheless, it could be argued that Jesus of Nebadon knew ahead of time that he would indeed cross paths with the repentant thief in “Paradise” at some point in the very distant future. However, in knowing all this, it makes no sense that Jesus of Nebadon would make such a statement in the first place. He could have had the same intended meaning made known by omitting the word “today” altogether and simply said “Verily, verily, I say to you, you shall be with me in Paradise.” So why would “Jesus” bother to utter such an unnecessarily complex sentence in the midst of slowly suffocating on the cross by adding the words “today” and “sometime” in an already lengthy statement?

The Bible records Jesus telling the thief, “**Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise**” (Luke 23:43; emphasis added). *The UB* has apparently taken a tip from the Jehovah’s Witnesses, who share a common belief in soul-sleep with their Seventh-Day Adventist forebears. Just as the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New World Translation of the Bible revises this passage to fit their belief in soul-sleep, so does *The UB* “correct” said passage. The New World Translation, though somewhat more subtle, is just as effective in its pivotal revisionism, as it merely moves the comma from behind the word “today” to in front of it: “Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise.”<sup>1</sup> Adding the word *sometime* in *The UB*’s rendition of this passage provides a somewhat more overt revision, and is a much more obvious ploy to undercut Jesus’ promise of immediate reward to the repentant sinner. To validate this eschatological divergence, *The UB* provides the premise that Jesus of Nebadon had been teaching cosmic reincarnation all along:

“Very plainly Jesus explained that the kingdom of heaven was an evolutionary experience, beginning here on earth and progressing up through successive life stations to Paradise.”  
(142:7.3)

Contrary to *The UB*’s journey of cosmic recycling, the Bible states that because of the blood of Jesus we can directly approach God the Father upon death, even to the very “throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16) and “behind the veil” (Hebrews 6:19). When Jesus died, the curtain of the temple was torn, symbolizing our access to God directly (Mark 15:38). What *The UB* tells us in effect, then, is that the sacrificial debt that Jesus paid on our behalf is not sufficient for believers to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Rather, we are told to become self-sufficient through a long, arduous journey that takes hundreds of lifetimes to accomplish.

The *UB* authors, apparently aware of the sensible simplicity of God’s plan for salvation as revealed in Scripture, provide their own backdrop for the “need” to endure successive lifetimes of spiritual struggle for achieving perfection:

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“The inability of the finite creature to approach the infinite Father is inherent, not in the Father’s aloofness, but in the finiteness and material limitations of created beings. The magnitude of the spiritual difference between the highest personality of universe existence and the lower groups of created intelligences is inconceivable. Were it possible for the lower orders of intelligence to be transported instantly into the presence of the Father himself, they would not know they were there. They would there be just as oblivious of the presence of the Universal Father as where they now are. There is a long, long road ahead of mortal man before he can consistently and within the realms of possibility ask for safe conduct into the Paradise presence of the Universal Father. Spiritually, man must be translated many times before he can attain a plane that will yield the spiritual vision which will enable him to see even any one of the Seven Master Spirits.”

(5:1.1)

“The morontia life, extending as it does over the various stages of the local universe career, is the only possible approach whereby material mortals could attain the threshold of the spirit world. What magic could death, the natural dissolution of the material body, hold that such a simple step should instantly transform the mortal and material mind into an immortal and perfected spirit? Such beliefs are but ignorant superstitions and pleasing fables.” (48:0.2)

Notice that the “revelators” do not rely on sheer logic or reasonableness, but rather name-calling, in order to justify their position. The point that is attempted to be made here is that it is “superstitious” to presume that the human mind can be “magically” transformed into the mind of a spirit being through mere physical death, as the Bible supposedly proscribes. But what the celestial authors do not reveal here is the circular reasoning behind their argument, in that it is *The UB*’s own preconception of reincarnation among the stars that the “superstitious fable” violates. Moreover, the celestial authors believe as the materialists do, that the human mind is the product of the chemical and physical activities of the brain. Once the human brain dies, the person’s Thought Adjuster and attendant angel in charge of transporting the person’s “memory transcript” meet at the Mansion Worlds for reconstitution therewith into a new “morontia” body, one that is slightly less material and a bit more “spiritual” in nature. The *UB* authors fail to provide a satisfying line of reasoning as to why God did nor or could not have chosen to allow for only one lifetime for a person to make a decision of faith that would affect where that person would spend eternity. If God could require that it take up to 570 life-times for a person to reach the “threshold of the spirit world” of Paradise (as is usually the case in the *UB* scheme; see 42:10.5), He could also have required that it take just one, with or without a Thought Adjuster and attending angels to deliver the necessary goods! It is by their own testimony that the *validity* of their testimony must rely.

What a relief it is for Christians to know that the biblical doctrine of justification means we have not only “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” but also “access” directly to God (Romans 5:1-2; Ephesians 2:18). There is no need for additional training experiences on other worlds to qualify us for fellowship and access to God, since the blood of Jesus gives us access to the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9:8). The reward and goal of our faith is not the fellowship with a spirit being (which is not the Holy Spirit), but fellowship with God. The Urantian hope of being “united with our indwelling Adjuster” pales in comparison with the Christian hope expressed in the New Testament.

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### Body Double

*The UB* teaches that, in similar fashion as it initially happened to Jesus of Nebadon on planet Urantia, the dead are not resurrected, but reincarnated into a different body on a different planet:

“On the mansion worlds the resurrected mortal survivors resume their lives just where they left off when overtaken by death. When you go from Urantia to the first mansion world, . . . you would hardly notice the difference except for the fact that you were in possession of a different body; the tabernacle of flesh and blood has been left behind on the world of [your] nativity.” (47:3.1)

This difference is important because, as has been previously discussed, these “resurrections” as they are called in *The UB* supposedly occur even while a person’s body remains in its grave on Earth. But Jesus of the Gospels said, “**Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation**” (John 5:28-29).<sup>2</sup> We will all come out of our graves in the same body we had before (albeit immortalized), not in an altogether different body. At the resurrection, Jesus “will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Philippians 3:21). Some may argue that this verse supports *The UB*’s contention that we will receive the new, improved “morontia” model just as was the case for Jesus of Nebadon. However, because the body of Jesus is physical according to the biblical account (Luke 24:39), and because believers will have a body like that of Jesus, believers’ bodies will also be physical. Finally, because Jesus is returning to Earth to rule (Revelation chapters 19-21), the resurrected believers will also be with Him on Earth, not on some other planet.

### To Be, Or Not to Be

Despite its overall appeal towards universal salvation, *The UB* does warn readers that a few rebellious souls will not ascend toward Paradise, but will be altogether done away with:

“The greatest punishment (in reality an inevitable consequence) for wrongdoing and deliberate rebellion against the government of God is loss of existence as an individual subject of that government. The final result of wholehearted sin is annihilation.” (2:3.2)

“Such a sin-identified mortal would then become wholly unspiritual in nature (and therefore personally unreal) and would experience eventual extinction of being.” (2:6.8)

“There will come an end for rebels and rebellion. . . . ‘The wages of sin is death’—eternal obliteration.” (46:8.4)

Note that the last passage cited above quotes a familiar biblical passage which is derived from one of Paul’s epistles: “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Of course, such admission on the part of an “Archangel of Nebadon” (46:8.5) is inconsistent with numerous other *UB* passages that say otherwise: while sin is a deliberate but forgivable act, only iniquity (a willful, continuous, and unrepentant sinful lifestyle) renders the verdict of annihilation.

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The Bible teaches that the lives of unrepentant sinners are not snuffed out, but that they are instead punished eternally. As Jesus Himself put it, “**And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**” (Matthew 25:46). The words “everlasting” and “eternal” in this verse both derive from the same root word (Greek: *aiōnios*), which connotes the attribute of eternity for both life and punishment. If “everlasting punishment” has an end or ceases, then by the same token so must “eternal life.” One might want to seriously consider accepting such ambivalent terms.

Apparently, neither did the apostle John learn of the doctrine of annihilationism from Jesus, as the following passage refers to the eternality of punishment for the unrepentant:

“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. . . . [T]he cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 20:10; 21:8)

Other biblical passages refer to those who are cast into hell, “**where the fire never goes out**” (Mark 9:43; NIV), and those who are punished such that “the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever” (Revelation 14:11). The prophet Daniel spoke of “everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2) and John the Baptist preached about the “unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:12). It therefore seems apparent that Old Testament and New alike exclude annihilation or extinction of life. This *UB* teaching reflects yet another Seventh-Day Adventist doctrine, and perhaps points to the background of the true *UB* authors.

A necessary corollary to the Seventh-Day Adventist doctrine of annihilationism is the doctrine of conditional immortality, a concept that also finds full endorsement within the pages of *The UB*:

“Man’s personality is eternal but with regard to identity a *conditioned eternal reality*. Having appeared in response to the Father’s will, personality will attain Deity destiny, but man must choose whether or not he will be present at the attainment of such destiny. In default of such choice, personality attains experiential Deity directly, becoming a part of the Supreme Being. The cycle is foreordained, but man’s participation therein is optional, personal, and experiential.” (112:5.2; emphasis added)

“Thought Adjuster fusion imparts eternal actualities to personality which were previously only *potential*. Among these new endowments may be mentioned: . . . *immortality* . . .” (112:7.1; emphasis added)

But even the Old Testament tells us that such is not the case, for we are all, saints and sinners alike, created to exist eternally: “He has put eternity in their hearts . . .” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

In *UB* theology, there is no need for forgiveness, only the need for annihilation if a person crosses some arbitrary limit of sinful behavior: “The final result of wholehearted sin is annihilation” (2:3.2). But how do we know when this line has been crossed, if we as humans have the propensity to commit sinful acts every single day of our lives? Do we ever come to a point in our life when we can say with absolute certainty that we are no longer capable of committing iniquitous acts against God or our fellow humans? And if we are not ever quite qualified to declare ourselves free of sin, then are we not all worthy candidates for annihilation upon death? It is because of this viscous cycle of human nature that God’s

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plan for redemption was forged independent of our inability to restore ourselves. It is only through Christ's sacrificial payment for sin to a just God by which He can then declare righteous to the unrighteous who accept Christ's payment on their behalf (cf. Romans 3:21-26).

### ENDNOTES

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1. *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1950), Luke 23:43.
2. Not surprisingly, this entire passage claiming that life and judgment are through the Son (John 5:24-30) is missing from *The UB's* retelling of the Gospels in Part IV (see Paper 147).