

Paper 144 — At Gilboa and in the Decapolis

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Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 144, in the order in which they appear

- (1) Wm. Arnold Stevens and Ernest Dewitt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study: An Analytical Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904, 1932)
- (2) David Smith, M.A., D.D., *Our Lord's Earthly Life* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925)

Note: This source is coded **Smith2**.

- (3) David Smith, M.A., D.D., *The Days of His Flesh: The Earthly Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, Eighth Edition, Revised (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1910)

Note: This source is coded **Smith1**.

- (4) Benjamin Willard **Robinson**, Ph.D., *The Sayings of Jesus: Their Background and Interpretation* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1930)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)

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PAPER 144 — AT GILBOA AND IN THE DECAPOLIS

144:0.1 September and October were spent in retirement at a secluded camp upon the slopes of Mount Gilboa. The month of September Jesus spent here alone with his apostles, teaching and instructing them in the truths of the kingdom.

144:0.2 There were a number of reasons why Jesus and his apostles were in retirement at this time on the borders of Samaria and the Decapolis. The Jerusalem religious rulers were very antagonistic; Herod Antipas still held John in prison, fearing either to release or execute him, while he continued to entertain suspicions that John and Jesus were in some way associated. These conditions made it unwise to plan for aggressive work in either Judea or Galilee. There was a third reason: the slowly augmenting tension between the leaders of John's disciples and the apostles of Jesus, which grew worse with the increasing number of believers.

144:0.3 Jesus knew that the days of the preliminary work of teaching and preaching were about over, that the next move involved the beginning of the full and final effort of his life on earth, and he did not wish the launching of this undertaking to be in any manner either trying or embarrassing to John the Baptist. Jesus had therefore decided to spend some time in retirement rehearsing his apostles and then to do some quiet work in the cities of the Decapolis until John should be either executed or released to join them in a united effort.

1. THE GILBOA ENCAMPMENT

144:1.1 As time passed, the twelve became more devoted to Jesus and increasingly committed to the work of the kingdom. Their devotion was in large part a matter of personal loyalty. They did not grasp his many-sided teaching; they did not fully comprehend the nature of Jesus or the significance of his bestowal on earth.

144:1.2 Jesus made it plain to his apostles that they were in retirement for three reasons:

144:1.3 1. To confirm their understanding of, and faith in, the gospel of the kingdom.

144:1.4 2. To allow opposition to their work in both Judea and Galilee to quiet down.

144:1.5 3. To await the fate of John the Baptist.

144:1.6 While tarrying on Gilboa, Jesus told the twelve much about his early life and his experiences on Mount Hermon;

[On one of these evenings he told the twelve something about the forty days which he spent in the hills near this place (141:1.3).]

he also revealed something of what happened in the hills during the forty days immediately after his baptism.

And he directly charged them that they should tell no man about these experiences until after he had returned to the Father.

144:1.7 During these September weeks they rested, visited, recounted their experiences since Jesus first called them to service, and engaged in an earnest effort to co-ordinate what the Master had so far taught them. In a measure they all sensed that this would be their last opportunity for prolonged rest. They realized that their next public effort in either Judea or Galilee would mark the beginning of the final proclamation of the coming kingdom, but they had little or no settled idea as to what the kingdom would be when it came. John and Andrew thought the kingdom had already come; Peter and James believed that it was yet to come;¹ Nathaniel and Thomas frankly confessed they were puzzled; Matthew, Philip, and Simon Zelotes were uncertain and confused; the twins were blissfully ignorant of the controversy; and Judas Iscariot was silent, noncommittal.

144:1.8 Much of this time Jesus was alone on the mountain near the camp. Occasionally he took with him Peter, James, or John, but more often he went off to pray or commune alone. Subsequent to the baptism of Jesus and the forty days in the Perean hills, it is hardly proper to speak of these seasons of communion with his Father as prayer, nor is it consistent to speak of Jesus as worshipping, but it is altogether correct to allude to these seasons as personal communion with his Father.

144:1.9 The central theme of the discussions throughout the entire month of September was prayer and worship.

XXVI: FROM THE FEAST OF DEDICATION UNTIL AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL TO EPHRAIM. (4 *Harmony of the Gospels* 138)

§93. DISCOURSE ON PRAYER. Luke 11:1-13.

1 And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray,

even as John also taught his disciples.

After they had discussed worship for some days, Jesus finally delivered his memorable discourse on prayer in answer to

Thomas's request: "Master, teach us how to pray."

144:1.10 John had taught his disciples a prayer,

a prayer for salvation in the coming kingdom.

Although Jesus never forbade his followers to use John's form of prayer, the apostles very early perceived that their Master did not fully approve of the practice of uttering set and formal prayers. Nevertheless, believers constantly requested to be taught how to pray. The twelve longed to know what form of petition Jesus would approve. And it was chiefly because of this need for some simple petition for the common people that Jesus at this time consented, in answer to Thomas's request, to teach them a suggestive form of prayer. Jesus gave this lesson one afternoon in the third week of their sojourn on Mount Gilboa.

2. THE DISCOURSE ON PRAYER

THE TWELVE AND THE MULTITUDE
(Smith² 132)

[John the Baptist] had not only enjoined his disciples to pray but furnished them with forms of prayer. One of these has been preserved—a prayer for the Messiah's advent:

“O Father,

show us your glory:

O Son, cause us to hear Thy voice:

O Spirit, sanctify our hearts for ever more. Amen” (S2 133).

144:2.1 “John indeed taught you a simple form of prayer:

‘O Father,

cleanse us from sin,

show us your glory,

reveal your love,

and let your spirit sanctify our hearts forevermore, Amen!’

He taught this prayer that you might have something to teach the multitude. He did not intend that you should use such a set and formal petition as the expression of your own souls in prayer.

144:2.2 “Prayer is entirely a personal and spontaneous expression of the attitude of the soul toward the spirit; prayer should be the communion of sonship and the expression of fellowship. Prayer, when indited by the spirit,² leads to co-operative spiritual progress. The ideal prayer is a form of spiritual communion which leads to intelligent worship. True praying is the sincere attitude of reaching heavenward for the attainment of your ideals.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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[Prayer is the breath of the soul (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* [1915], p. 125).]

144:2.3 “Prayer is the breath of the soul

and should lead you to be persistent in your attempt to ascertain the Father’s will.

XXVI: FROM THE FEAST OF DEDICATION UNTIL AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL TO EPHRAIM. (4 *Harmony of the Gospels* 138)

§93. DISCOURSE ON PRAYER. Luke 11:1-13.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend,

and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey,

and I have nothing to set before him;

7 and he from within shall answer and say,

Trouble me not: the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed;

I cannot rise and give thee?

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend,

yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth.

If any one of you has a neighbor,

and you go to him at midnight and say: ‘Friend, lend me three loaves,

for a friend of mine on a journey has come to see me,

and I have nothing to set before him’;

and if your neighbor answers,

‘Trouble me not, for the door is now shut and the children and I are in bed;

therefore I cannot rise and give you bread,’

you will persist, explaining that your friend hungers, and that you have no food to offer him.

I say to you, though your neighbor will not rise and give you bread because he is your friend,

yet because of your importunity he will get up and give you as many loaves as you need.

If, then, persistence will win favors even from mortal man, how much more will your persistence in the spirit win the bread of life for you from the willing hands of the Father in heaven.

9 And I say unto you,

Again I say to you:

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth;

For every one who asks receives; he who seeks finds;

and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

and to him who knocks the door of salvation will be opened.

11 And of which of you that is a father

144:2.4 “Which of you who is a father,

if his son asks unwisely, would hesitate to give in accordance with parental wisdom rather than in the terms of the son’s faulty petition?

shall his son ask a loaf, and he will give him a stone?

If the child needs a loaf, will you give him a stone

just because he unwisely asks for it?

or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent?

If your son needs a fish, will you give him a watersnake

[Wetstein on Mt. vii. 10: “For a fish a fisherman sometimes catches a water-snake” (Smith 173, fn).]

just because it may chance to come up in the net with the fish and the child foolishly asks for the serpent?

12 Or *if* he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion?

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 144

13 If ye then, being evil,
know how to give good gifts unto your children,
how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit
to them that ask him?

If you, then, being mortal and finite,
know how to answer prayer and give good and appropriate gifts to your children,
how much more shall your heavenly Father give the spirit
and many additional blessings
to those who ask him?
Men ought always to pray and not become discouraged.

XXVII: FROM THE WITHDRAWAL TO EPHRAIM UNTIL THE FINAL ARRIVAL IN JERUSALEM. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 155)

§108. THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM.
Luke 17:20—18:8.

18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; 2 saying, There was in a city a judge,

144:2.5 “Let me tell you the story of a certain judge who lived in a wicked city.

who feared not God, and regarded not man:

This judge feared not God nor had respect for man.

3 and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying,

Now there was a needy widow in that city who came repeatedly to this unjust judge, saying,

Avenge me of mine adversary.

‘Protect me from my adversary.’

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself,

For some time he would not give ear to her, but presently he said to himself:

Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

‘Though I fear not God nor have regard for man,

5 yet because this widow troubleth me,

yet because this widow ceases not to trouble me,

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming.

X: THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS
(Robinson 172)

JESUS' TEACHING REGARDING PRAYER
(Robinson 177)

Jesus gave them a story [*i.e.* the story of the judge, above] to illustrate the need of **persistence** in prayer and of never becoming discouraged (R 178).

Have **faith** in God. I assure you, if anyone should say to this **mountain, remove** and hurl yourself into the sea and would not have any doubt in his heart but believe that what he says will happen, it would be so for him... (Mk. 11:22-25; I Cor. 13:2) (R 179).

[First He gave them a **form** or rather a **model of prayer**. "Thus pray: ..." (Smith2 133).]

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I will vindicate her lest she wear me out by her continual coming.'

These stories I tell you to encourage you to **persist** in praying

and not to intimate that your petitions will change the just and righteous Father above.

Your persistence, however, is not to win favor with God but to change your earth attitude and to enlarge your soul's capacity for spirit receptivity.³

144:2.6 "But when you pray, you exercise so little faith.

Genuine **faith will remove mountains** of material difficulty which may chance to lie in the path of soul expansion and spiritual progress."

3. THE BELIEVER'S PRAYER

144:3.1 But the apostles were not yet satisfied; they desired Jesus to give them a **model** prayer which they could teach the new disciples. After listening to this discourse on prayer, James Zebedee said:

"Very good, Master, but we do not desire a **form of prayer** for ourselves so much as for the newer believers who so frequently beseech us, 'Teach us how acceptably to pray to the Father in heaven.'"

XIV: ORGANIZATION OF THE KINGDOM. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 56)

§49. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Matt., chs. 5, 6, 7, [8:1]. Luke 6:20-49.

[See 126:3.3.]

Matt. 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye:
Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name,

10 Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done,

as in heaven, so on earth.

[Thy will be done *in earth, as it is in heaven* (KJV).]

11 Give us this day our daily bread [ERV mg.: Gr. *our bread for the coming day*].

12 And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And bring us not in temptation,

but deliver us from the evil *one* [ERV mg.: Or, *evil*].

144:3.2 When James had finished speaking, Jesus said: “If, then, you still desire such a prayer, I would present the one which I taught my brothers and sisters in Nazareth”:

144:3.3 Our Father who is in heaven,

Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come;

your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our bread for tomorrow;

Refresh our souls with the water of life.

And forgive us every one our debts

As we also have forgiven our debtors.

Save us in temptation,

deliver us from evil,

And increasingly make us perfect like yourself.

XIX: A LESSON IN PRAYER (Smith 168)

The Rabbis prescribed eighteen forms of prayer for daily repetition, and John the Baptist had furnished prayers to His disciples and enjoined diligent and frequent use thereof (S1 168).

And, moreover, other teachers instructed their disciples in the art of prayer (S1 168).

X: THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS (Robinson 172)

JESUS' TEACHING REGARDING PRAYER (Robinson 177)

A Jewish synagogue service in Jesus' day included many specified prayers; at least eighteen definitely formulated prayers are known which were used in the ordinary services. Jesus warns his disciples against too many set prayers (R 181).

[Matt. 6.5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. (§49)]

Jesus directs his disciples to avoid all publicity in their own personal prayers (R 181).

JESUS' PERSONAL PRAYERS (Robinson 174)

On some occasions he spent the whole night in prayer (Lk. 6:12) (R 175).

144:3.4 It is not strange that the apostles desired Jesus to teach them a model prayer for believers.

John the Baptist had taught his followers several prayers;

all great teachers had formulated prayers for their pupils.

The religious teachers of the Jews had some twenty-five or thirty set prayers which they recited in the synagogues⁴

and even on the street corners.

Jesus was particularly averse to praying in public.

Up to this time the twelve had heard him pray only a few times.

They observed him spending entire nights at prayer or worship,

and they were very curious to know the manner or form of his petitions. They were really hard pressed to know what to answer the multitudes when they asked to be taught how to pray as John had taught his disciples.

PRAYER IN A WORLD OF SCIENCE (Robinson 172)

Jesus once said, “When you pray, go into your own room and shut the door” (Matt. 6:6) (R 173).

THE TWELVE AND THE MULTITUDE (Smith² 132)

In truth it is not a distinctively Christian prayer. As it was given, it ended abruptly, since the familiar conclusion “For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory for ever. Amen” is an early liturgical addition.

Even this is a mere Jewish doxology, and the prayer lacks that distinctive note of truly Christian prayer—the all-prevailing plea “in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (S2 136-37).

144:3.5 Jesus taught the twelve always to pray in secret; to go off by themselves amidst the quiet surroundings of nature

or to go in their rooms and shut the doors when they engaged in prayer.

144:3.6 After Jesus’ death and ascension to the Father it became the practice of many believers to finish this so-called Lord’s prayer by the addition of—“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Still later on, two lines were lost in copying,

and there was added to this prayer an extra clause, reading: “For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forevermore.”

144:3.7 Jesus gave the apostles the prayer in collective form as they had prayed it in the Nazareth home. He never taught a formal personal prayer, only group, family, or social petitions. And he never volunteered to do that.

144:3.8 Jesus taught that effective prayer must be:⁵

144:3.9 1. Unselfish—not alone for oneself.

144:3.10 2. Believing—according to faith.

144:3.11 3. Sincere—honest of heart.

144:3.12 4. Intelligent—according to light.

144:3.13 5. Trustful—in submission to the Father's all-wise will.

144:3.14 When Jesus spent whole nights on the mountain in prayer, it was mainly for his disciples, particularly for the twelve. The Master prayed very little for himself, although he engaged in much worship of the nature of understanding communion with his Paradise Father.

4. MORE ABOUT PRAYER

144:4.1 For days after the discourse on prayer the apostles continued to ask the Master questions regarding this all-important and worshipful practice. Jesus' instruction to the apostles during these days, regarding prayer and worship, may be summarized and restated in modern phraseology as follows:

144:4.2 The earnest and longing repetition of any petition, when such a prayer is the sincere expression of a child of God and is uttered in faith, no matter how ill-advised or impossible of direct answer, never fails to expand the soul's capacity for spiritual receptivity.⁶

144:4.3 In all praying, remember that sonship is a gift.⁷ No child has aught to do with earning the status of son or daughter. The earth child comes into being by the will of its parents. Even so, the child of God comes into grace and the new life of the spirit by the will of the Father in heaven. Therefore must the kingdom of heaven—divine sonship—be received as by a little child. You earn righteousness—progressive character development—but you receive sonship by grace and through faith.

144:4.4 Prayer led Jesus up to the supercommunion of his soul with the Supreme Rulers of the universe of universes. Prayer will lead the mortals of earth up to the communion of true worship. The soul's spiritual capacity for receptivity⁸ determines the quantity of heavenly blessings which can be personally appropriated and consciously realized as an answer to prayer.

X: THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS
(Robinson 172)

PRAYER IN A WORLD OF SCIENCE (Robinson
172)

144:4.5 Prayer and its associated worship is a technique of

Individual character and personality are the hope of the human race.... This ideal of progress in personal character can only be attained by a definite effort on the part of each individual to detach himself repeatedly from the machinery of his daily duties (R 172).

detachment from the daily routine of life, from the monotonous grind of material existence.

It is an avenue of approach to spiritualized self-realization and individuality of intellectual and religious attainment.

144:4.6 Prayer is an antidote for harmful introspection. At least, prayer as the Master taught it is such a beneficent ministry to the soul. Jesus consistently employed the beneficial influence of praying for one's fellows.

XIX: A LESSON IN PRAYER (Smith 168)

"Our Father," says the Prayer; and the Rabbis required that, when man prayed, he should "associate himself with the Congregation," praying not in the singular but in the plural number (S1 173).

The Master usually prayed in the plural, not in the singular.

Only in the great crises of his earth life did Jesus ever pray for himself.

144:4.7 Prayer is the breath of the spirit life in the midst of the material civilization of the races of mankind. Worship is salvation for the pleasure-seeking generations of mortals.

X: THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS
(Robinson 172)

PRAYER IN A WORLD OF SCIENCE (Robinson 172)

In a recent classroom discussion, one student defined prayer as a **charging of the battery of the soul** through contact with the Infinite God.

This figure has in it much of truth, but the class put it in second place when another student contributed his definition. “Prayer,” he said, “is a **tuning-in of the radio of the soul**,

to catch the music and message of the eternal” (R 173-74).

144:4.8 As prayer may be likened to **recharging the spiritual batteries of the soul**,

so worship may be compared to the act of **tuning in the soul**

to catch the universe broadcasts of the infinite spirit of the Universal Father.

144:4.9 Prayer is the sincere and longing look of the child to its spirit Father; it is a psychologic process of exchanging the human will for the divine will. Prayer is a part of the divine plan for making over that which is into that which ought to be.

144:4.10 One of the reasons why Peter, James, and John, who so often accompanied Jesus on his long night vigils, never heard Jesus pray, was because their Master so rarely uttered his prayers as spoken words. Practically all of Jesus’ praying was done in the spirit and in the heart—silently.

144:4.11 Of all the apostles, Peter and James came the nearest to comprehending the Master’s teaching about prayer and worship.

5. OTHER FORMS OF PRAYER

144:5.1 From time to time, during the remainder of Jesus' sojourn on earth, he brought to the notice of the apostles several additional forms of prayer, but he did this only in illustration of other matters, and he enjoined that these "parable prayers" should not be taught to the multitudes. Many of them were from other inhabited planets, but this fact Jesus did not reveal to the twelve. Among these prayers were the following:

144:5.2 Our Father in whom consist the universe realms,

Uplifted be your name and all-glorious your character.

Your presence encompasses us, and your glory is manifested

Imperfectly through us as it is in perfection shown on high.

Give us this day the vivifying forces of light,

And let us not stray into the evil bypaths of our imagination,

For yours is the glorious indwelling, the everlasting power,

And to us, the eternal gift of the infinite love of your Son.

Even so, and everlastingly true.

* * *

144:5.3 Our creative Parent, who is in the center of the universe,

Bestow upon us your nature and give to us your character.

Make us sons and daughters of yours by grace

And glorify your name through our eternal achievement.

Your adjusting and controlling spirit give to live and dwell within

That we may do your will on this sphere as angels do your bidding in light.

Sustain us this day in our progress along the path of truth.

Deliver us from inertia, evil, and all sinful transgression.

Be patient with us as we show loving-kindness to our fellows.

Shed abroad the spirit of your mercy in our creature hearts.

Lead us by your own hand, step by step, through the uncertain maze of life,

And when our end shall come, receive into your own bosom our faithful spirits.

Even so, not our desires but your will be done.

* * *

144:5.4 Our perfect and righteous heavenly Father,

This day guide and direct our journey.

Sanctify our steps and co-ordinate our thoughts.

Ever lead us in the ways of eternal progress.

Fill us with wisdom to the fullness of power

And vitalize us with your infinite energy.

Inspire us with the divine consciousness of

The presence and guidance of the seraphic hosts.

Guide us ever upward in the pathway of light;

Justify us fully in the day of the great judgment.

Make us like yourself in eternal glory

And receive us into your endless service on high.

* * *

144:5.5 Our Father who is in the mystery,

Reveal to us your holy character.

Give your children on earth this day

To see the way, the light, and the truth.

Show us the pathway of eternal progress

And give us the will to walk therein.

Establish within us your divine kingship

And thereby bestow upon us the full mastery of self.

Let us not stray into paths of darkness and death;

Lead us everlastingly beside the waters of life.

Hear these our prayers for your own sake;

Be pleased to make us more and more like yourself.

At the end, for the sake of the divine Son,

Receive us into the eternal arms.

Even so, not our will but yours be done.

* * *

144:5.6 Glorious Father and Mother, in one parent combined,

Loyal would we be to your divine nature.

Your own self to live again in and through us

By the gift and bestowal of your divine spirit,

Thus reproducing you imperfectly in this sphere

As you are perfectly and majestically shown on high.

Give us day by day your sweet ministry of brotherhood

And lead us moment by moment in the pathway of loving service.

Be you ever and unfailingly patient with us

Even as we show forth your patience to
our children.

Give us the divine wisdom that does all
things well

And the infinite love that is gracious to
every creature.

Bestow upon us your patience and
loving-kindness

That our charity may enfold the weak of
the realm.

And when our career is finished, make it
an honor to your name,

A pleasure to your good spirit, and a
satisfaction to our soul helpers.

Not as we wish, our loving Father, but as
you desire the eternal good of your mortal
children,

Even so may it be.

* * *

144:5.7 Our all-faithful Source and
all-powerful Center,

Reverent and holy be the name of your
all-gracious Son.

Your bounties and your blessings have
descended upon us,

Thus empowering us to perform your will
and execute your bidding.

Give us moment by moment the
sustenance of the tree of life;

Refresh us day by day with the living
waters of the river thereof.

Step by step lead us out of darkness and
into the divine light.

Renew our minds by the transformations
of the indwelling spirit,

And when the mortal end shall finally
come upon us,

Receive us to yourself and send us forth
in eternity.

Crown us with celestial diadems of
fruitful service,

And we shall glorify the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Influence.

Even so, throughout a universe without
end.

* * *

144:5.8 Our Father who dwells in the
secret places of the universe,

Honored be your name, revered your
mercy, and respected your judgment.

Let the sun of righteousness shine upon
us at noontime,

While we beseech you to guide our
wayward steps in the twilight.

Lead us by the hand in the ways of your
own choosing

And forsake us not when the path is hard
and the hours are dark.

Forget us not as we so often neglect and
forget you.

But be you merciful and love us as we
desire to love you.

Look down upon us in kindness and
forgive us in mercy

As we in justice forgive those who
distress and injure us.

May the love, devotion, and bestowal of
the majestic Son

Make available life everlasting with your
endless mercy and love.

May the God of universes bestow upon us
the full measure of his spirit;

Give us grace to yield to the leading of
this spirit.

By the loving ministry of devoted
seraphic hosts

May the Son guide and lead us to the end
of the age.

Make us ever and increasingly like
yourself

And at our end receive us into the eternal
Paradise embrace.

Even so, in the name of the bestowal Son

And for the honor and glory of the
Supreme Father.

144:5.9 Though the apostles were not at liberty to present these prayer lessons in their public teachings, they profited much from all of these revelations in their personal religious experiences. Jesus utilized these and other prayer models as illustrations in connection with the intimate instruction of the twelve, and specific permission has been granted for transcribing these seven specimen prayers into this record.

6. CONFERENCE WITH JOHN'S APOSTLES

144:6.1 Around the first of October, Philip and some of his fellow apostles were in a near-by village buying food when they met some of the apostles of John the Baptist. As a result of this chance meeting in the market place there came about a three weeks' conference at the Gilboa camp between the apostles of Jesus and the apostles of John, for John had recently appointed twelve of his leaders to be apostles, following the precedent of Jesus. John had done this in response to the urging of Abner, the chief of his loyal supporters. Jesus was present at the Gilboa camp throughout the first week of this joint conference but absented himself the last two weeks.

144:6.2 By the beginning of the second week of this month, Abner had assembled all of his associates at the Gilboa camp and was prepared to go into council with the apostles of Jesus. For three weeks these twenty-four men were in session three times a day and for six days each week. The first week Jesus mingled with them between their forenoon, afternoon, and evening sessions. They wanted the Master to meet with them and preside over their joint deliberations, but he steadfastly refused to participate in their discussions, though he did consent to speak to them on three occasions. These talks by Jesus to the twenty-four were on sympathy, co-operation, and tolerance.

144:6.3 Andrew and Abner alternated in presiding over these joint meetings of the two apostolic groups. These men had many difficulties to discuss and numerous problems to solve. Again and again would they take their troubles to Jesus, only to hear him say: "I am concerned only with your personal and purely religious problems. I am the representative of the Father to the individual, not to the group. If you are in personal difficulty in your relations with God, come to me, and I will hear you and counsel you in the solution of your problem. But when you enter upon the co-ordination of divergent human interpretations of religious questions and upon the socialization of religion, you are destined to solve all such problems by your own decisions. Albeit, I am ever sympathetic and always interested, and when you arrive at your conclusions touching these matters of nonspiritual import, provided you are all agreed, then I pledge in advance my full approval and hearty co-operation. And now, in order to leave you unhampered in your deliberations, I am leaving you for two weeks. Be not anxious about me, for I will return to you. I will be about my Father's business, for we have other realms besides this one."

144:6.4 After thus speaking, Jesus went down the mountainside, and they saw him no more for two full weeks. And they never knew where he went or what he did during these days. It was some time before the twenty-four could settle down to the serious consideration of their problems, they were so disconcerted by the absence of the Master. However, within a week they were again in the heart of their discussions, and they could not go to Jesus for help.

144:6.5 The first item the group agreed upon was the adoption of the prayer which Jesus had so recently taught them. It was unanimously voted to accept this prayer as the one to be taught believers by both groups of apostles.

144:6.6 They next decided that, as long as John lived, whether in prison or out, both groups of twelve apostles would go on with their work, and that joint meetings for one week would be held every three months at places to be agreed upon from time to time.

144:6.7 But the most serious of all their problems was the question of baptism. Their difficulties were all the more aggravated because Jesus had refused to make any pronouncement upon the subject. They finally agreed: As long as John lived, or until they might jointly modify this decision, only the apostles of John would baptize believers, and only the apostles of Jesus would finally instruct the new disciples. Accordingly, from that time until after the death of John, two of the apostles of John accompanied Jesus and his apostles to baptize believers, for the joint council had unanimously voted that baptism was to become the initial step in the outward alliance with the affairs of the kingdom.

144:6.8 It was next agreed, in case of the death of John, that the apostles of John would present themselves to Jesus and become subject to his direction, and that they would baptize no more unless authorized by Jesus or his apostles.

144:6.9 And then was it voted that, in case of John's death, the apostles of Jesus would begin to baptize with water as the emblem of the baptism of the divine Spirit. As to whether or not repentance should be attached to the preaching of baptism was left optional; no decision was made binding upon the group. John's apostles preached, "Repent and be baptized." Jesus' apostles proclaimed, "Believe and be baptized."

144:6.10 And this is the story of the first attempt of Jesus' followers to co-ordinate divergent efforts, compose differences of opinion, organize group undertakings, legislate on outward observances, and socialize personal religious practices.

144:6.11 Many other minor matters were considered and their solutions unanimously agreed upon. These twenty-four men had a truly remarkable experience these two weeks when they were compelled to face problems and compose difficulties without Jesus. They learned to differ, to debate, to contend, to pray, and to compromise, and throughout it all to remain sympathetic with the other person's viewpoint and to maintain at least some degree of tolerance for his honest opinions.

144:6.12 On the afternoon of their final discussion of financial questions, Jesus returned, heard of their deliberations, listened to their decisions, and said: "These, then, are your conclusions, and I shall help you each to carry out the spirit of your united decisions."

144:6.13 Two months and a half from this time John was executed, and throughout this period the apostles of John remained with Jesus and the twelve. They all worked together and baptized believers during this season of labor in the cities of the Decapolis. The Gilboa camp was broken up on November 2, A.D. 27.

7. IN THE DECAPOLIS CITIES

144:7.1 Throughout the months of November and December, Jesus and the twenty-four worked quietly in the Greek cities of the Decapolis, chiefly in Scythopolis, Gerasa, Abila, and Gadara. This was really the end of that preliminary period of taking over John's work and organization. Always does the socialized religion of a new revelation pay the price of compromise with the established forms and usages of the preceding religion which it seeks to salvage.¹⁰ Baptism was the price which the followers of Jesus paid in order to carry with them, as a socialized religious group, the followers of John the Baptist. John's followers, in joining Jesus' followers, gave up just about everything except water baptism.

144:7.2 Jesus did little public teaching on this mission to the cities of the Decapolis. He spent considerable time teaching the twenty-four and had many special sessions with John's twelve apostles. In time they became more understanding as to why Jesus did not go to visit John in prison, and why he made no effort to secure his release.

But they never could understand why Jesus did no marvelous works, why he refused to produce outward signs of his divine authority. Before coming to the Gilboa camp, they had believed in Jesus mostly because of John's testimony, but soon they were beginning to believe as a result of their own contact with the Master and his teachings.

144:7.3 For these two months the group worked most of the time in pairs, one of Jesus' apostles going out with one of John's. The apostle of John baptized, the apostle of Jesus instructed, while they both preached the gospel of the kingdom as they understood it. And they won many souls among these gentiles and apostate Jews.

144:7.4 Abner, the chief of John's apostles, became a devout believer in Jesus and was later on made the head of a group of seventy teachers whom the Master commissioned to preach the gospel.

8. IN CAMP NEAR PELLA

144:8.1 The latter part of December they all went over near the Jordan, close by Pella, where they again began to teach and preach. Both Jews and gentiles came to this camp to hear the gospel.

XV: THE SECOND PREACHING TOUR.

(*A Harmony of the Gospels* 71)

§52. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S LAST MESSAGE.

Matt. 11:2-30. Luke 7:18-35.

It was while Jesus was teaching the multitude one afternoon that some of John's special friends brought the Master the last message which he ever had from the Baptist.¹¹

<p>Luke 7:20 And when the men were come unto him they said,</p>	<p>144:8.2 John had now been in prison a year and a half, and most of this time Jesus had labored very quietly; so it was not strange that John should be led to wonder about the kingdom.</p>
<p>John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying,</p>	<p>John's friends interrupted Jesus' teaching to say to him:</p>
<p>Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?</p>	<p>"John the Baptist has sent us to ask— are you truly the Deliverer, or shall we look for another?"</p>
<p>21 In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight.</p>	
<p>22 And he answered and said unto them,</p>	<p>144:8.3 Jesus paused to say to John's friends:</p>
<p>Go,</p>	<p>"Go back and tell John that he is not forgotten.</p>
<p>and tell John what things ye have seen and heard;</p>	<p>Tell him what you have seen and heard,</p>
<p>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them.</p>	<p>that the poor have good tidings preached to them."</p>
<p>23 And blessed he is, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me.</p>	
	<p>And when Jesus had spoken further to the messengers of John,</p>
<p>24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John,</p>	<p>he turned again to the multitude and said:</p>

	“Do not think that John doubts the gospel of the kingdom. He makes inquiry only to assure his disciples who are also my disciples. John is no weakling. Let me ask you who heard John preach before Herod put him in prison:
What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?	What did you behold in John—a reed shaken with the wind?
25 But what went ye out to see? a man	A man
	of changeable moods
clothed in soft raiment?	and clothed in soft raiment?
Behold, they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings’ courts.	As a rule they who are gorgeously appared and who live delicately are in kings’ courts
	and in the mansions of the rich.
26 But what went ye out to see? a prophet?	But what did you see when you beheld John? A prophet?
Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.	Yes, I say to you, and much more than a prophet.
27 This is he of whom it is written,	Of John it was written:
Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way before thee.	‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face; he shall prepare the way before you.’
Matt. 11:11 Verily I say unto you,	144:8.4 “Verily, verily, I say to you,
Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist:	among those born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist;
yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.	yet he who is but small in the kingdom of heaven is greater
	because he has been born of the spirit and knows that he has become a son of God.”

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 144

Luke 7:29 And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

144:8.5 Many who heard Jesus that day submitted themselves to John's baptism,

thereby publicly professing entrance into the kingdom.

And the apostles of John were firmly knit to Jesus from that day forward. This occurrence marked the real union of John's and Jesus' followers.

144:8.6 After the messengers had conversed with Abner, they departed for Machaerus to tell all this to John. He was greatly comforted, and his faith was strengthened by the words of Jesus and the message of Abner.

144:8.7 On this afternoon Jesus continued to teach, saying:

Matt. 11:16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation?

“But to what shall I liken this generation?

Many of you will receive neither John's message nor my teaching.

It is like unto children sitting in the marketplaces, who call unto their fellows,

You are like the children playing in the market place who call to their fellows

17 and say, we piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not mourn.

and say: ‘We piped for you and you did not dance; we wailed and you did not mourn.’

And so with some of you.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said he had a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking,

The Son of Man comes eating and drinking,

and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

and these same people say: ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!’

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 144

Luke 7:35 And wisdom is justified of all her children.

Truly, wisdom is justified by her children.

Matt. 11:25 At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding,

144:8.8 “It would appear that

the Father in heaven has hidden some of these truths from the wise and haughty,

and didst reveal them unto babes:

while he has revealed them to babes.

But the Father does all things well; the Father reveals himself to the universe by the methods of his own choosing.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,

Come, therefore, all you who labor and are heavy laden,

and I will give you rest.

and you shall find rest for your souls.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart:

Take upon you the divine yoke,

and ye shall find rest into your souls.

and you will experience the peace of God, which passes all understanding.”

9. DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

XVIII: THE THIRD PREACHING TOUR.
(*A Harmony of the Gospels* 93)

§65. DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. Matt. 14:1-12. Mark 6:14-29. Luke 9:7-9.

[28 A.D. the Baptist's execution . . . January (Smith² xiv).]

144:9.1 John the Baptist was executed by order of Herod Antipas on the evening of January 10, A.D. 28.

The next day

Mark 6.29 And when his disciples heard thereof,

a few of John's disciples who had gone to Machaerus heard of his execution

they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

[The Baptist's disciples obtained their master's mutilated corpse and give it reverent burial. Tradition says that they conveyed it to Sebaste, the ancient city of Samaria; and this is indeed probable, since Sebaste was near Ænon, the scene of his later ministry, and it was fitter that his mortal remains should rest in the unhallowed soil of Samaria than in the unkindly territory of the tyrant (Smith2 170).]

[!]

Matt. 14:[12] and they went and told Jesus.

and, going to Herod, made request for his body,

which they put in a tomb,

later giving it burial at Sebaste,

the home of Abner.

The following day, January 12, they started north to the camp of John's and Jesus' apostles near Pella,

and they told Jesus about the death of John.

When Jesus heard their report, he dismissed the multitude and, calling the twenty-four together, said: "John is dead. Herod has beheaded him. Tonight go into joint council and arrange your affairs accordingly. There shall be delay no longer. The hour has come to proclaim the kingdom openly and with power. Tomorrow we go into Galilee."

144:9.2 Accordingly, early on the morning of January 13, A.D. 28, Jesus and the apostles, accompanied by some twenty-five disciples, made their way to Capernaum and lodged that night in Zebedee's house.

1. *Contrast*: James grasped the thrilling truth that Jesus wanted his children on earth to live as though they were already citizens of the completed heavenly kingdom (140:8.25).

2. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God (E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages* [1898], p. 189).

3. Some examples of ‘capacity for spirit receptivity’ (or variants thereof) elsewhere in the UB:

Such a love can be truly experienced, albeit while quality of experience is unlimited, quantity of such an experience is strictly limited by the human capacity for spiritual receptivity and by the associated capacity to love the Father in return (3:4.5).

The spiritual presence of Divinity must of necessity be differential in the universe. It is determined by the spiritual capacity of receptivity and by the degree of the consecration of the creature's will to the doing of the divine will (5:2.1).

The evolution of the religious capacity of receptivity in the inhabitants of a world largely determines their rate of spiritual advancement and the extent of religious revelation (52:2.3).

The ... developing mind of a personality possesses a certain innate capacity for spirit receptivity and therefore contains the potentials of spiritual progress and attainment (65:6.10).

4. In 144:3.4 both Smith and Robinson mention the eighteen daily prayers recited by observant Jews in Jesus' day. Since Robinson said the Jews had “at least eighteen” set prayers, Sadler estimated or guessed the total number of these prayers as being “twenty-five or thirty.” In 150:8.6 Edersheim mentions these eighteen prayers, also called eulogies or benedictions. Sadler misinterpreted Edersheim's statement about a nineteenth prayer being added after Jesus' death, which explains why the UB mistakenly says, in 150:8.6, that there were nineteen at the time of Jesus. For more information about the history of these prayers (known as the Amidah), see <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-amidah>.

5. Smith¹ (p. 169) describes the Lord's Prayer as: *brief, simple, catholic and spiritual*.

6. See footnote 3, above.

7. *Compare*: V: SONSHIP AS A GIFT (Rall 51)

8. See footnote 3, above.

9. In Mark 16:16, Jesus says:

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.

But in Acts 2:38, Peter says:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

10. *Compare:* As a religious teacher, Jesus of Nazareth started out with the cult which had been established by John the Baptist and progressed as far as he could away from fasts and forms (92:5.13).

11. See 135:11.4 for the previous account of this episode.