

Paper 2 — The Nature of God

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Endnotes and some Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 2, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Orville J. Nave, A.M., D.D., LL.D., *Nave's Topical Bible: A Digest of the Holy Scriptures* (New York: Topical Bible Publishing Company, from press of Eaton & Mains, 1896, 1897)

Note: This source is coded **Nave's TB**.

- (2) Robert Ernest **Hume**, M.A., Ph.D., *Treasure-House of the Living Religions: Selections from Their Sacred Scriptures* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932)
- (3) W. R. **Matthews**, K.C.V.O., D.D., D.Lit., *God in Christian Thought and Experience* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1930)
- (4) Albert C. **Knudson**, *The Doctrine of God* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1930)
- (5) H. A. **Overstreet**, *The Enduring Quest: A Search for a Philosophy of Life* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1931)
- (6) David **Paulson** and W. S. **Sadler**, "Sowing for Physical and Spiritual Health: A Comprehensive Review of the Digestive Process," in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Vol. 77, No. 50, Dec. 11, 1900, p. 10

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 2 — THE NATURE OF GOD

[The material creature's highest possible concept of the reality of the Universal Creator

is embraced within the spiritual ideals of the exalted idea of divine personality (1:5.27).]

2:0.1 Inasmuch as man's highest possible concept of God

is embraced within the human idea and ideal of a primal and infinite personality,

it is permissible, and may prove helpful, to study certain characteristics of the divine nature which constitute the character of Deity.

The nature of God can best be understood by the revelation of the Father which Michael of Nebadon unfolded in his manifold teachings and in his superb mortal life in the flesh. The divine nature can also be better understood by man if he regards himself as a child of God and looks up to the Paradise Creator as a true spiritual Father.

2:0.2 The nature of God can be studied in a revelation of supreme ideas, the divine character can be envisaged as a portrayal of supernal ideals, but the most enlightening and spiritually edifying of all revelations of the divine nature is to be found in the comprehension of the religious life of Jesus of Nazareth, both before and after his attainment of full consciousness of divinity. If the incarnated life of Michael is taken as the background of the revelation of God to man, we may attempt to put in human word symbols certain ideas and ideals concerning the divine nature which may possibly contribute to a further illumination and unification of the human concept of the nature and the character of the personality of the Universal Father.

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2:0.3 In all our efforts to enlarge and spiritualize the human concept of God, we are tremendously handicapped by the limited capacity of the mortal mind.

[We are fully cognizant of the difficulties of our assignment; we recognize the impossibility of fully translating the language of the concepts of divinity and eternity into the symbols of the language of the finite concepts of the mortal mind.

We are also seriously handicapped in the execution of our assignment by the limitations of language

and by the poverty of material which can be utilized for purposes of illustration or comparison in our efforts to portray divine values and to present spiritual meanings to the finite, mortal mind of man.

All our efforts to enlarge the human concept of God would be well-nigh futile

But we know that there dwells within the human mind a fragment of God,

except for the fact that the mortal mind is indwelt by the bestowed Adjuster of the Universal Father

and that there sojourns with the human soul the Spirit of Truth;

and is pervaded by the Truth Spirit of the Creator Son.

and we further know that these spirit forces conspire to enable material man to grasp the reality of spiritual values and to comprehend the philosophy of universe meanings (0:12.13).]

Depending, therefore, on the presence of these divine spirits within the heart of man for assistance in the enlargement of the concept of God, I cheerfully undertake the execution of my mandate to attempt the further portrayal of the nature of God to the mind of man.

1. THE INFINITY OF GOD

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

UNSEARCHABLE: (*Nave's TB* 514)

Job 37:23. *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out:* (*NTB* 514)

Psa. 77:19. Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known (*NTB* 514).

[Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: *his* understanding *is* infinite (Psa. 147:5).]

Psa. 145:3. Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and *his* greatness *is* unsearchable (*NTB* 514).

1 Kin. 8:12. The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness (*NTB* 514).

Job 5:9. Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number: (*NTB* 514)

Job 36:26. Behold, God *is* great, and we know *him* not, neither can the number of his years be searched out (*NTB* 514).

1 Kin. 8:27. Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? (*NTB* 514)

2:1.1 "Touching the Infinite, we cannot find him out.

The divine footsteps are not known."

"His understanding is infinite

and his greatness is unsearchable."

The blinding light of the Father's presence is such that to his lowly creatures he apparently

"dwells in the thick darkness."

Not only are his thoughts and plans unsearchable, but

"he does great and marvelous things without number."

"God is great; we comprehend him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out."

"Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven (universe) and the heaven of heavens (universe of universes) cannot contain him."

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Rom. 11:33. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (NTB 514)

“How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!”

I: THE ONE SUPREME GOD (Hume 3)

CHRISTIANITY (Hume 3)

There is but One God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him (H 3).

2:1.2 “There is but one God, the infinite Father,

Let them who suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator (H 3).

who is also a faithful Creator.”

HINDUISM (Hume 3)

He is the Creator, He the Disposer. He Himself is one, single, one only (H 3).

“The divine Creator is also the Universal Disposer,

“How many gods are there?”

“One! I know that Person,

The Last Source of every soul” (H 3).

the source and destiny of souls.

IV: THE DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE AND INNER PRESENCE (Hume 15)

HINDUISM (Hume 15)

Verily, there is One Supreme Soul, Present in all beings and in one's own soul. All beings are of the One Soul (H 16).

He is the Supreme Soul,

I: THE ONE SUPREME GOD (Hume 3)

HINDUISM (Hume 3)

Supreme Being, Supreme Abode,
 Supreme in purifying power art Thou!
 Person eternal and divine, unborn,
 pervading all,
 The **Primal** Lord of Heaven! (H 4).

the **Primal** Mind, and the Unlimited Spirit
 of all creation.”

CONFUCIANISM (Hume 3)

Great Heaven makes no mistakes.
 If you go on to deteriorate in your virtue,
 You will bring the people to great distress
 (H 3).

“The **great Controller makes no mistakes.**

ISLAM (Hume 4)

All on the earth shall pass away.
 But the face of the Lord shall abide,
resplendent with majesty and glory (H 4).

He is **resplendent in majesty and glory.”**

SIKHISM (Hume 5)

There is but one God, Whose name is
 True,
 The Creator, **devoid of fear and enmity,**
Immortal, unborn, **self-existent,** great and
bountiful (H 5).

“The Creator God is wholly **devoid of**
fear and enmity. He is **immortal,** eternal,
self-existent, divine, and **bountiful.”**

TAOISM (Hume 6)

How pure and still is the Supreme Being!
How deep and unfathomable,
 as if the Honored **Ancestor of all things!**
 (H 6)

“**How pure** and beautiful, **how deep and**
unfathomable is the supernal **Ancestor of**
all things!”

It is only the Supreme that excels
 in **imparting itself to men,**
 and enabling them to achieve merit (H 6).

“The Infinite is most excellent in that he
imparts himself to men.

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ZOROASTRIANISM (Hume 6)

When I comprehended Thee as the real
Creator of justice,
Lord among the deeds of life—
Then through wisdom I recognized Thee
in my thought
As the Beginning and the End, the Father
of good purpose (H 6).

He is the beginning and the end, the
Father of every good and perfect
purpose.”

II: THE DIVINE POWER AND PURPOSE (Hume 7)

CHRISTIANITY (Hume 7)

With God all things are possible (H 7).

“With God all things are possible;

SIKHISM (Hume 9)

Man’s power is not at his own disposal.
The Cause of causes is the Lord of all.
What pleaseth God, shall ultimately be (H
10).

the eternal Creator is the cause of
causes.”¹

VIII: THE LIVING AND PERSONAL GOD (Matthews 157)

2:1.3 Notwithstanding the infinity of
the stupendous manifestations of the
Father’s eternal and universal personality,
he is unqualifiedly self-conscious of both
his infinity and eternity; likewise he
knows fully his perfection and power.

We have argued in this chapter that the
quality of self-knowledge, which is, in
some measure, a necessary attribute of
personality, cannot be present in full
measure in human persons, and that the
perfect Personality of God alone can
possess this quality in its completeness
(M 176).

He is the only being in the universe, aside
from his divine co-ordinates, who
experiences a perfect, proper, and
complete appraisal of himself.

2:1.4 The Father constantly and unfailingly meets the need of the differential of demand for himself as it changes from time to time in various sections of his master universe.² The great God knows and understands himself; he is infinitely self-conscious of all his primal attributes of perfection. God is not a cosmic accident; neither is he a universe experimenter. The Universe Sovereigns may engage in adventure; the Constellation Fathers may experiment; the system heads may practice; but the Universal Father sees the end from the beginning, and his divine plan and eternal purpose actually embrace and comprehend all the experiments and all the adventures of all his subordinates in every world, system, and constellation in every universe of his vast domains.

2:1.5 No thing is new to God, and no cosmic event ever comes as a surprise;

[*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; ... (Isa. 40:22)]

[Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually (Heb. 7:3).]

[Source?]

he inhabits the circle of eternity.

He is without beginning or end of days.

To God there is no past, present, or future; all time is present at any given moment. He is the great and only I AM.

2:1.6 The Universal Father is absolutely and without qualification infinite in all his attributes; and this fact, in and of itself, automatically shuts him off from all direct personal communication with finite material beings and other lowly created intelligences.

2:1.7 And all this necessitates such arrangements for contact and communication with his manifold creatures as have been ordained, first, in the personalities of the Paradise Sons of God, who, although perfect in divinity, also often partake of the nature of the very flesh and blood of the planetary races, becoming one of you and one with you; thus, as it were, God becomes man, as occurred in the bestowal of Michael, who was called interchangeably the Son of God and the Son of Man. And second, there are the personalities of the Infinite Spirit, the various orders of the seraphic hosts and other celestial intelligences who draw near to the material beings of lowly origin and in so many ways minister to them and serve them. And third, there are the impersonal Mystery Monitors, Thought Adjusters, the actual gift of the great God himself sent to indwell such as the humans of Urantia, sent without announcement and without explanation. In endless profusion they descend from the heights of glory to grace and indwell the humble minds of those mortals who possess the capacity for God-consciousness or the potential therefor.

2:1.8 In these ways and in many others, in ways unknown to you and utterly beyond finite comprehension, does the Paradise Father lovingly and willingly downstep and otherwise modify, dilute, and attenuate his infinity in order that he may be able to draw nearer the finite minds of his creature children. And so, through a series of personality distributions which are diminishingly absolute, the infinite Father is enabled to enjoy close contact with the diverse intelligences of the many realms of his far-flung universe.

2:1.9 All this he has done and now does, and evermore will continue to do, without in the least detracting from the fact and reality of his infinity, eternity, and primacy. And these things are absolutely true, notwithstanding the difficulty of their comprehension, the mystery in which they are enshrouded, or the impossibility of their being fully understood by creatures such as dwell on Urantia.

2:1.10 Because the First Father is infinite in his plans and eternal in his purposes, it is inherently impossible for any finite being ever to grasp or comprehend these divine plans and purposes in their fullness. Mortal man can glimpse the Father's purposes only now and then, here and there, as they are revealed in relation to the outworking of the plan of creature ascension on its successive levels of universe progression. Though man cannot encompass the significance of infinity, the infinite Father does most certainly fully comprehend and lovingly embrace all the finity of all his children in all universes.

2:1.11 Divinity and eternity the Father shares with large numbers of the higher Paradise beings, but we question whether infinity and consequent universal primacy is fully shared with any save his co-ordinate associates of the Paradise Trinity.

Infinity of personality must, perforce, embrace all finitude of personality; hence the truth—literal truth—of the teaching which declares that

[For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring (Acts 17:28).]

“In him we live and move and have our being.”

That fragment of the pure Deity of the Universal Father which indwells mortal man *is* a part of the infinity of the First Great Source and Center, the Father of Fathers.

2. THE FATHER’S ETERNAL PERFECTION

VII: THE ABSOLUTENESS OF GOD (Knudson 242)

ETERNITY (Knudson 278)

And so we find that, while Israel only slowly arrived at the idea of the omnipresence of Jehovah, it seems to have grasped the idea of his **eternity** from the outset (K 279).

2:2.1 Even your olden prophets understood the **eternal**, never-beginning, never-ending, circular nature of the Universal Father.

God is literally and eternally present in his universe of universes. He inhabits the present moment with all his absolute majesty and eternal greatness.

[For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (Jn. 5:26)]

“The Father has life in himself,

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[?] [And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 Jn. 5:11).]

and this life is eternal life.”

[Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; (Acts 17:25)]

Throughout the eternal ages it has been the Father who

“gives to all life.”

[I am the LORD, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal. 3:6).]

There is infinite perfection in the divine integrity.

“I am the Lord; I change not.”

[Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights,

Our knowledge of the universe of universes discloses not only that he is

the Father of lights,

with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (Jas. 1:17).]

but also that in his conduct of interplanetary affairs

there “is no variableness neither shadow of changing.”

[Declaring the end from the beginning,

He “declares the end from the beginning.”

and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (Isa. 47:10).

He says: “My counsel shall stand; I will do all my pleasures”

[According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: (Eph. 3:11)]

“according to the eternal purpose which I purposed in my Son.”

Thus are the plans and purposes of the First Source and Center like himself: eternal, perfect, and forever changeless.

2:2.2 There is finality of completeness and perfection of repleteness in the mandates of the Father.

[Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it (Eccl. 3:14).]

“Whatsoever God does, it shall be forever; nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it.”

The Universal Father does not repent of his original purposes of wisdom and perfection. His plans are steadfast, his counsel immutable, while his acts are divine and infallible.

[A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night (Ps. 90:4).]

“A thousand years in his sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night.”

The perfection of divinity and the magnitude of eternity are forever beyond the full grasp of the circumscribed mind of mortal man.

2:2.3 The reactions of a changeless God, in the execution of his eternal purpose, may seem to vary in accordance with the changing attitude and the shifting minds of his created intelligences; that is, they may apparently and superficially vary; but underneath the surface and beneath all outward manifestations, there is still present the changeless purpose, the everlasting plan, of the eternal God.³

[*Note:* This may refer to the seven phases of perfection enumerated in 0:1.20-26.]

2:2.4 Out in the universes, perfection must necessarily be a relative term, but in the central universe and especially on Paradise, perfection is undiluted; in certain phases it is even absolute.

Trinity manifestations vary the exhibition of the divine perfection but do not attenuate it.

2:2.5 God's primal perfection consists not in an assumed righteousness but rather in the inherent perfection of the goodness of his divine nature. He is final, complete, and perfect. There is no thing lacking in the beauty and perfection of his righteous character. And the whole scheme of living existences on the worlds of space is centered in the divine purpose of elevating all will creatures to the high destiny of the experience of sharing the Father's Paradise perfection. God is neither self-centered nor self-contained; he never ceases to bestow himself upon all self-conscious creatures of the vast universe of universes.

2:2.6 God is eternally and infinitely perfect; he cannot personally know imperfection as his own experience, but he does share the consciousness of all the experience of imperfectness of all the struggling creatures of the evolutionary universes of all the Paradise Creator Sons. The personal and liberating touch of the God of perfection overshadows the hearts and encircuits the natures of all those mortal creatures who have ascended to the universe level of moral discernment. In this manner, as well as through the contacts of the divine presence, the Universal Father actually participates in the experience *with* immaturity and imperfection in the evolving career of every moral being of the entire universe.

2:2.7 Human limitations, potential evil, are not a part of the divine nature, but mortal experience *with* evil and all man's relations thereto are most certainly a part of God's ever-expanding self-realization in the children of time—creatures of moral responsibility who have been created or evolved by every Creator Son going out from Paradise.

[See 1:5.14: "expansions of self-realization".]

3 . JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

2:3.1 God is righteous; therefore is he just.

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

JUDGE, AND HIS JUSTICE: (*Nave's TB* 460)

Psa. 145:7. The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works (*NTB* 462).

Ezek. 14:23. Ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD (*NTB* 463).

Psa. 19:9. The judgments of the LORD *are* true and righteous altogether (*NTB* 461).

2 Chr. 19:7 *There is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts (*NTB* 461).

[Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6:7).]

“The Lord is righteous in all his ways.”

“‘I have not done without cause all that I have done,’ says the Lord.”

“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

The justice of the Universal Father cannot be influenced by the acts and performances of his creatures,

“for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, no respect of persons, no taking of gifts.”

2:3.2 How futile to make puerile appeals to such a God to modify his changeless decrees so that we can avoid the just consequences of the operation of his wise natural laws and righteous spiritual mandates!

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap.”

True, even in the justice of reaping the harvest of wrongdoing, this divine justice is always tempered with mercy.

Infinite wisdom is the eternal arbiter which determines the proportions of justice and mercy which shall be meted out in any given circumstance.

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.

[*Compare:* In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* [1898], p. 107).]

In the last analysis, such sin-identified individuals have destroyed themselves by becoming wholly unreal through their embrace of iniquity.

The factual disappearance of such a creature is, however, always delayed until the ordained order of justice current in that universe has been fully complied with.

2:3.3 Cessation of existence is usually decreed at the dispensational or epochal adjudication of the realm or realms. On a world such as Urantia it comes at the end of a planetary dispensation. Cessation of existence can be decreed at such times by co-ordinate action of all tribunals of jurisdiction, extending from the planetary council up through the courts of the Creator Son

[*Compare:* I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened (Daniel 7:9,10).]

to the judgment tribunals of the Ancients of Days.

The mandate of dissolution originates in the higher courts of the superuniverse following an unbroken confirmation of the indictment originating on the sphere of the wrongdoer's residence; and then, when sentence of extinction has been confirmed on high, the execution is by the direct act of those judges residential on, and operating from, the headquarters of the superuniverse.

2:3.4 When this sentence is finally confirmed,

[For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been (Obad. 1:16).]

the sin-identified being instantly becomes as though he had not been.⁴

There is no resurrection from such a fate; it is everlasting and eternal. The living energy factors of identity are resolved by the transformations of time and the metamorphoses of space into the cosmic potentials whence they once emerged. As for the personality of the iniquitous one, it is deprived of a continuing life vehicle by the creature's failure to make those choices and final decisions which would have assured eternal life. When the continued embrace of sin by the associated mind culminates in complete self-identification with iniquity, then upon the cessation of life, upon cosmic dissolution, such an isolated personality is absorbed into the oversoul of creation, becoming a part of the evolving experience of the Supreme Being. Never again does it appear as a personality; its identity becomes as though it had never been. In the case of an Adjuster-indwelt personality, the experiential spirit values survive in the reality of the continuing Adjuster.

2:3.5 In any universe contest between actual levels of reality, the personality of the higher level will ultimately triumph over the personality of the lower level. This inevitable outcome of universe controversy is inherent in the fact that divinity of quality equals the degree of reality or actuality of any will creature.

[See 54:3,4: “3. The Time Lag of Justice” and “4. The Mercy Time Lag.”]

Undiluted evil, complete error, willful sin, and unmitigated iniquity are inherently and automatically suicidal. Such attitudes of cosmic unreality can survive in the universe only because of transient mercy-tolerance pending the action of the justice-determining and fairness-finding mechanisms of the universe tribunals of righteous adjudication.

[See 7:4.4: “1. *The Plan of Progressive Attainment*.”]

2:3.6 The rule of the Creator Sons in the local universes is one of creation and spiritualization. These Sons devote themselves to the effective execution of the Paradise plan of progressive mortal ascension, to the rehabilitation of rebels and wrong thinkers, but when all such loving efforts are finally and forever rejected, the final decree of dissolution is executed by forces acting under the jurisdiction of the Ancients of Days.

4. THE DIVINE MERCY

2:4.1 Mercy is simply justice tempered by that wisdom which grows out of perfection of knowledge and the full recognition of the natural weaknesses and environmental handicaps of finite creatures.

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

MERCY OF: (*Nave's TB* 474)

Psa. 86:15. Thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth (*NTB* 476).

Rom 10:13. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (*NTB* 479).

Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (*NTB* 477).

Psa. 103:17. The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; (*NTB* 477)

Psa. 106:1. His mercy endureth for ever (*NTB* 477).

Jer. 9:24. I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD (*NTB* 478).

Lam. 3:33. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men (*NTB* 478).

2 Cor. 1:3. Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; (*NTB* 480)

“Our God is full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy.”

Therefore “whosoever calls upon the Lord shall be saved,”

“for he will abundantly pardon.”

“The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting”;

yes, “his mercy endures forever.”

“I am the Lord who executes loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight.”

“I do not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men,”

for I am

“the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.”

2:4.2 God is inherently kind, naturally compassionate, and everlastingly merciful. And never is it necessary that any influence be brought to bear upon the Father to call forth his loving-kindness. The creature's need is wholly sufficient to insure the full flow of the Father's tender mercies and his saving grace. Since God knows all about his children, it is easy for him to forgive. The better man understands his neighbor, the easier it will be to forgive him, even to love him.⁵

2:4.3 Only the discernment of infinite wisdom enables a righteous God to minister justice and mercy at the same time and in any given universe situation. The heavenly Father is never torn by conflicting attitudes towards his universe children; God is never a victim of attitudinal antagonisms. God's all-knowingness unfailingly directs his free will in the choosing of that universe conduct which perfectly, simultaneously, and equally satisfies the demands of all his divine attributes and the infinite qualities of his eternal nature.

2:4.4 Mercy is the natural and inevitable offspring of goodness and love. The good nature of a loving Father could not possibly withhold the wise ministry of mercy to each member of every group of his universe children. Eternal justice and divine mercy together constitute what in human experience would be called *fairness*.

2:4.5 Divine mercy represents a fairness technique of adjustment between the universe levels of perfection and imperfection. **Mercy is the justice of Supremacy** adapted to the situations of the evolving finite, the righteousness of eternity modified to meet the highest interests and universe welfare of the children of time. Mercy is not a contravention of justice but rather an understanding interpretation of the demands of supreme justice as it is fairly applied to the subordinate spiritual beings and to the material creatures of the evolving universes. **Mercy is the justice of the Paradise Trinity** wisely and lovingly visited upon the manifold intelligences of the creations of time and space as it is formulated by divine wisdom and determined by the all-knowing mind and the sovereign free will of the Universal Father and all his associated Creators.

5. THE LOVE OF GOD

[He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love (1 Jn 4:8).]

2:5.1 “God is love”;

therefore his only personal attitude towards the affairs of the universe is always a reaction of divine affection.

The Father loves us sufficiently to bestow his life upon us.

[That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5:45).]

“He makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

2:5.2 It is wrong to think of God as being coaxed into loving his children because of the sacrifices of his Sons or the intercession of his subordinate creatures,

[The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God (Jn. 16:27).]

“for the Father himself loves you.”

It is in response to this paternal affection that God sends the marvelous Adjusters to indwell the minds of men.

God’s love is universal;

[And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17).]

“whosoever will may come.”

[Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4).]

He would “have all men be saved by coming into the knowledge of the truth.”

[Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish (Matt. 18:14).]

He is “not willing that any should perish.”

2:5.3 The **Creators** are the very first to attempt to save man from the disastrous results of his foolish transgression of the divine laws.

God’s love is by nature a fatherly affection; therefore does he sometimes

[For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness (Heb. 10:12).]

“chasten us for our own profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness.”

Even during your fiery trials remember that

[In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old (Isa. 63:19).]

“in all our afflictions he is afflicted with us.”

2:5.4 God is divinely kind to sinners.

[Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him;

When rebels return to righteousness, they are mercifully received,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:7).]

“for our God will abundantly pardon.”

[I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins (Isa. 43:25).]

“I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”

[Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: (1 Jn. 3:1)]

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.”

2:5.5 After all, the greatest evidence of the goodness of God and the supreme reason for loving him is the indwelling gift of the Father—the Adjuster who so patiently awaits the hour when you both shall be eternally made one. Though you cannot find God by searching, if you will submit to the leading of the indwelling spirit, you will be unerringly guided, step by step, life by life, through universe upon universe, and age by age, until you finally stand in the presence of the Paradise personality of the Universal Father.

2:5.6 How unreasonable that you should not worship God because the limitations of human nature and the handicaps of your material creation make it impossible for you to see him. Between you and God there is a tremendous distance (physical space) to be traversed.

There likewise exists a great gulf of spiritual differential which must be bridged; but notwithstanding all that physically and spiritually separates you from the Paradise personal presence of God, stop and ponder the solemn fact that God lives within you; he has in his own way already bridged the gulf. He has sent of himself, his spirit, to live in you and to toil with you as you pursue your eternal universe career.

2:5.7 I find it easy and pleasant to worship one who is so great and at the same time so affectionately devoted to the uplifting ministry of his lowly creatures. I naturally love one who is so powerful in creation and in the control thereof, and yet who is so perfect in goodness and so faithful in the loving-kindness which constantly overshadows us. I think I would love God just as much if he were not so great and powerful, as long as he is so good and merciful. We all love the Father more because of his nature than in recognition of his amazing attributes.

2:5.8 When I observe the Creator Sons and their subordinate administrators struggling so valiantly with the manifold difficulties of time inherent in the evolution of the universes of space, I discover that I bear these lesser rulers of the universes a great and profound affection.

[We love him, because he first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19).]

After all, I think we all, including the mortals of the realms, love the Universal Father and all other beings, divine or human, because we discern that these personalities truly love us.⁶

The experience of loving is very much a direct response to the experience of being loved. Knowing that God loves me, I should continue to love him supremely, even though he were divested of all his attributes of supremacy, ultimacy, and absoluteness.

2:5.9 The Father's love follows us now and throughout the endless circle of the eternal ages. As you ponder the loving nature of God, there is only one reasonable and natural personality reaction thereto: You will increasingly love your Maker; you will yield to God an affection analogous to that given by a child to an earthly parent; for, as a father, a real father, a true father, loves his children, so the Universal Father loves and forever seeks the welfare of his created sons and daughters.

XI: LOVE AND EVIL (Matthews 223)

The conception of the love of God must be combined with that of an awful and mysterious Holiness. The love of God is holy.

2:5.10 But the love of God is an intelligent and farseeing parental affection.

The divine love functions in unified association with divine wisdom and all other infinite characteristics of the perfect nature of the Universal Father.

And finally, we must not take the saying, "God is love," as if it were, in the language of logicians, a simply convertible proposition.

God is love,

It is not equivalent to the statement that "love is God." ... God is the personal life whose fundamental quality is love, whose acts and purposes are to be interpreted in the light of this conviction. Love is not God but "*of God*" (M 225-26).

but love is not God.

The greatest manifestation of the divine love for mortal beings is observed in the bestowal of the Thought Adjusters,

The central insight in which the Gospel is founded is that the Holy One who laid down His life for His friends is not only the supreme example of heroic human goodness, but the most complete revelation of the character of God (M 224).

but your greatest revelation of the Father's love is seen in the bestowal life of his Son Michael as he lived on earth the ideal spiritual life.

We misunderstand the love of God if we think of it as a general desire for the welfare of the human race or of the world. The love of God is individualized (M 232).

It is the indwelling Adjuster who individualizes the love of God to each human soul.

2:5.11 At times I am almost pained to be compelled to portray the divine affection of the heavenly Father for his universe children by the employment of the human word symbol *love*. This term, even though it does connote man's highest concept of the mortal relations of respect and devotion, is so frequently designative of so much of human relationship that is wholly ignoble and utterly unfit to be known by any word which is also used to indicate the matchless affection of the living God for his universe creatures! How unfortunate that I cannot make use of some supernal and exclusive term which would convey to the mind of man the true nature and exquisitely beautiful significance of the divine affection of the Paradise Father.

Many philosophies have put forward a spiritual view of the world, based upon the deliverance of man's conscience, and have been able to reach the conception of a common good towards which we aspire, in which, when attained, each separate soul will find satisfaction; but so long as they leave out the central Person

and think of a **Kingdom of Good** rather than a **Kingdom of God**,

they must lack the joy and consoling power which arise from the conviction that there is a unique series of "good works prepared for me to walk in", that there is a unique good for me to attain, and that there is a loving thought and sympathy which knows and enters into every detail of my outward lot and inner experience (M 232-33).

2:5.12 When man loses sight of the love of a personal God,

the **kingdom of God** becomes merely the **kingdom of good**.

Notwithstanding the infinite unity of the divine nature, love is the dominant characteristic of all God's personal dealings with his creatures.

6. THE GOODNESS OF GOD

2:6.1 In the physical universe we may see the divine beauty, in the intellectual world we may discern eternal truth, but the goodness of God is found only in the spiritual world of personal religious experience.

IX: THE GOODNESS OF GOD (Knudson 325)

[PREAMBLE] (Knudson 325)

In its essence religion is trust in the goodness of God (K 325).

In its true essence, religion is a faith-trust in the goodness of God.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

The bare **absoluteness** of God might awaken the sense of wonder

and his metaphysical **personality** might elicit a spirit of inquiry with reference to the ultimate meaning of life; but these mental states belong only to the antechamber of religion (K 325).

It is only insofar as he is **morally good**, and so worthy of being trusted, that he is truly God in the religious sense of the term.

At first the idea of divinity probably had very little ethical content; the gods were **feared** more than they were **trusted** (K 325).

Faith in the **responsiveness** of the **superworld** to **human need** has always been the heart of religion,

and the development of religion through the ages has consisted largely in the increasing clearness and thoroughness with which men have moralized this responsiveness. The first great step in this process was the more definite personalizing of the superhuman world through animistic influences—a change that laid the foundation of a more distinctly **ethical** relation between the human and the divine.

URANTIA PAPER 2

God could be great and **absolute**,

somehow even intelligent and **personal**,

in philosophy,

but in religion God must also be **moral**; he must be **good**.

Man might **fear** a great God, but he **trusts** and loves only a good God.

This goodness of God is a part of the personality of God, and its full revelation appears only in the personal religious experience of the believing sons of God.

2:6.2 Religion implies that the **superworld** of spirit nature is cognizant of, and **responsive** to, the fundamental **needs** of the **human** world.

Evolutionary religion may become **ethical**,

The second great step was the rise of ethical monotheism in Israel and the ascription of **moral** absoluteness to God. This advance was due to the prophets, who thus created a new ethical and **spiritual** atmosphere in which the Jewish-Christian religion has since lived and moved and had its being. Here it is that we have the essence of **“revealed” religion** (K 326).

but only **revealed religion** becomes truly and **spiritually moral**.

The olden concept that God is a Deity dominated by kingly morality was upstepped by Jesus to that affectionately touching level of intimate family morality of the parent-child relationship, than which there is none more tender and beautiful in mortal experience.

III: THE DIVINE GOODNESS AND WONDER (**Hume** 11)

CHRISTIANITY (Hume 11)

Despiseth thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the **goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?** (H 11)

2:6.3 The “richness of the **goodness of God leads erring man to repentance.**”

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,

“Every good gift and every perfect gift

and cometh down from the Father of lights,

comes down from the Father of lights.”

with Whom is no variableness/neither shadow of changing (H 11).

HINDUISM (Hume 12)

God is the good man’s **refuge** in his need (H 12).

“God is good; he is the eternal **refuge** of the souls of men.”

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY (Hume 13)

The Lord, the Lord God, **merciful and gracious,**

“The Lord God is **merciful and gracious.**

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 2

Long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth! (H 13)

He is long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth.”

O taste and see that the Lord is good!
Blessed is the man who trusteth in Him (H 13).

“Taste and see that the Lord is good!
Blessed is the man who trusts him.”

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

“The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

The Lord is good to all.

And His tender mercies are over all His works (H 13).

O God of our salvation, Who art the confidence
Of all the ends of our earth?
Thou crownest the year with Thy Goodness (H 13).

He is the God of salvation.”

He healeth the broken in heart,
And bindeth up their wounds (H 13).

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up the wounds of the soul.

ZOROASTRIANISM (Hume 14)

O Wise One! Verily, I will regard Thee
As the All-powerful Benefactor;
For, with Thy cherishing hand Thou offerest help
Both to the righteous as well as to the wicked (H 14).

He is man’s all-powerful benefactor.”

IX: THE GOODNESS OF GOD
(Knudson 326)

BIBLICAL TEACHING (Knudson 326)

Belief in the divine Kingship

2:6.4 The concept of God as a king-judge,

had its ethical and religious value for the ancient Israelite. It meant the deification of law and the common conscience, and in that respect it marked a most significant advance beyond the earlier nature-religions (K 329).

although it fostered a high moral standard and created a law-respecting people as a group,

[Jehovah's] arbitrariness was regarded as inherent in his sovereignty and not as a moral shortcoming, but it was on that account none the less a fact that needed to be reckoned with. It left the believer with a feeling of insecurity.

left the individual believer in a sad position of insecurity respecting his status in time and in eternity.

He did not know with certainty what God might do, and this was inevitable so long as he was thought of primarily as King or Judge (K 329).

God is called "Father" a number of times in the Old Testament, and the term was in common use among Jesus' contemporaries.

The later Hebrew prophets proclaimed God to be a Father to Israel;

But it is generally held by New Testament scholars that its use by Jesus had a new and different character.... Indeed, this was one of the most characteristic things in his teaching, that God appears in it not simply as the Father of men in general, but as *his* Father (K 331-32).

Jesus revealed God as the Father of each human being.

The entire mortal concept of God is transcendently illuminated by the life of Jesus.

In the Old Testament a man might suffer in spite of his being just, but in the New Testament suffering is a *necessity* for one who is in perfect fellowship with God. In other words, self-sacrifice is inherent in perfect love. And this thought Jesus introduced into his conception of God (K 332-33).

Selflessness is inherent in parental love.

God loves not *like* a father, but *as* a father. He is the Paradise Father of every universe personality.

The attribute of *righteousness* brings out the thought that **God is the ultimate source and ground of moral distinctions** and that in him we have the perfect standard of right.

The *justice* of God involves the same general idea, but directs special attention to the activity of the divine will in apportioning good and ill to men according to their deserts.... The attribute of **truth** differs from the preceding attributes in that it takes special cognizance of **God as Revealer** (K 336).

In Scripture we find the categorical statement that God is love; he has no higher attribute. By love in its human form is meant a **craving** and a **giving** impulse. Both impulses are essential to true love (K 337).

[The divine love] is objective, it seeks the welfare, the redemption of all men.... At the same time there must be in it more or less of the love of complacency, the love which takes pleasure in men and **seeks fellowship** with them. This is implied in the idea of the divine Fatherhood (K 338).

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVE (Knudson 339)

But in the course of the development of Christian theology the conviction arose that the divine **righteousness** and the divine **love** are logically **opposed** to each other

and that the real genius of Christianity lies in the way in which this opposition was overcome in the interest of the divine love (K 342).

2:6.5 Righteousness implies that **God is the source of the moral law** of the universe.

Truth exhibits **God as a revealer**, as a teacher.

But love **gives** and **craves** affection,

seeks understanding fellowship such as exists between parent and child.

Righteousness may be the divine thought, but **love** is a father's attitude.

The erroneous supposition that the **righteousness** of God was **irreconcilable** with the selfless **love** of the heavenly Father,

In God [according to the above-mentioned conviction] there is a deep-seated dualism,

a dualism that in practice can be overcome only by an act of **atonement** (K 348).

The **divine righteousness**, in other words, does not involve **strict retributive justice**. No atonement in the ordinary sense of the term is necessary before the forgiving love of God can become operative (K 346).

The question ... has arisen as to whether **wrath** may properly be attributed to God, and, if so, how it should be construed (K 346).

According to [one] view, wrath is a “**restrained** manifestation of **love**.” It is “holy love itself, feeling so far hindered because *they* have turned away from its blessed influence whom it would have received into its fellowship.” There is in the divine wrath, therefore, nothing of the vindictive or **vengeful** (K 347).

presupposed absence of unity in the nature of Deity

and led directly to the elaboration of the **atonement** doctrine,

which is a philosophic assault upon both the unity and the free-willness of God.

2:6.6 The affectionate heavenly Father, whose spirit indwells his children on earth, is not a divided personality—one of justice and one of mercy—neither does it require a mediator to secure the Father’s favor or forgiveness.

Divine righteousness is not dominated by **strict retributive justice**;

God as a father transcends God as a judge.

2:6.7 God is never **wrathful**, **vengeful**, or angry.

It is true that wisdom does often **restrain** his **love**,

while justice conditions his rejected mercy.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

The love of righteousness implies hatred of sin. Between the wrath of God and his love there is, consequently, no antithesis. Both serve the same holy purpose, and if love be the proper designation of this purpose, then wrath is an instrument of love or an altered form of it (K 347).

LOVE AND PERSONALITY (Knudson 349)

[contd] It is customary to say that God loves the sinner and hates the sin (K 349).

In this distinction between sin and the sinner there is an element of truth.

But it is not a distinction made by Scripture, nor is it one that can be accepted as ultimately valid. Love is properly directed only toward persons, and the same is true of hate insofar as it is the ethical antithesis of love (K 349).

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His love of righteousness cannot help being exhibited as equal hatred for sin.

The Father is not an inconsistent personality; the divine unity is perfect. In the Paradise Trinity there is absolute unity despite the eternal identities of the co-ordinates of God.

2:6.8 God loves the sinner and hates the sin:

such a statement is true philosophically,

but God is a transcendent personality,

and persons can only love and hate other persons.

Sin is not a person. God loves the sinner because he is a personality reality (potentially eternal), while towards sin God strikes no personal attitude, for sin is not a spiritual reality; it is not personal; therefore does only the justice of God take cognizance of its existence.

And yet there is a sense in which we may think of God as hating the sin and loving the sinner. Only in very extreme cases, if at all, does the sinner completely identify himself with his sin. The sin is not a complete expression of his personality.... Toward him as the subject of redemption the divine love in the sense of benevolence is, consequently, directed. Sin, on the other hand, ... has nothing good in it, and hence upon it the divine wrath or hatred is properly vented. Its destruction is the necessary condition for the salvation of the sinner (K 349-50).

The love of God saves the sinner; the law of God destroys the sin.

This attitude of the divine nature would apparently change if the sinner finally identified himself wholly with sin just as the same mortal mind may also fully identify itself with the indwelling spirit Adjuster. Such a sin-identified mortal would then become wholly unspiritual in nature (and therefore personally unreal) and would experience eventual extinction of being. Unreality, even incompleteness of creature nature, cannot exist forever in a progressively real and increasingly spiritual universe.

As over against a legalistic but theistic Pharisaism we would naturally say that God is personal love, but as over against an impersonal naturalism we would more fittingly say that God is a loving Person.

2:6.9 Facing the world of personality, God is discovered to be a loving person; facing the spiritual world, he is a personal love;

At bottom the two expressions have virtually the same meaning (K 352).

in religious experience he is both.

It remains to be pointed out that the attributes of personality and love agree in fixing attention on the volitional, as distinguished from the intellectual, side of the divine nature. The fundamental thing in personality is will, and this also is true of love (K 353).

Love identifies the volitional will of God.

The goodness of God rests at the bottom of the divine free-willness—the universal tendency to love, show mercy, manifest patience, and minister forgiveness.

7. DIVINE TRUTH AND BEAUTY

2:7.1 All finite knowledge and creature understanding are *relative*. Information and intelligence, gleaned from even high sources, is only relatively complete, locally accurate, and personally true.

2:7.2 Physical facts are fairly uniform, but truth is a living and flexible factor in the philosophy of the universe. Evolving personalities are only partially wise and relatively true in their communications. They can be certain only as far as their personal experience extends. That which apparently may be wholly true in one place may be only relatively true in another segment of creation.

2:7.3 Divine truth, final truth, is uniform and universal, but the story of things spiritual, as it is told by numerous individuals hailing from various spheres, may sometimes vary in details owing to this relativity in the completeness of knowledge and in the repleteness of personal experience as well as in the length and extent of that experience.

While the laws and decrees, the thoughts and attitudes, of the First Great Source and Center are eternally, infinitely, and universally true; at the same time, their application to, and adjustment for, every universe, system, world, and created intelligence, are in accordance with the plans and technique of the Creator Sons as they function in their respective universes, as well as in harmony with the local plans and procedures of the Infinite Spirit and of all other associated celestial personalities.

IX: THE PHILOSOPHIC TEST: THE CRITERION OF ACTUALITY (Overstreet 129)

[Preamble] (Overstreet 129)

While indeed the illumination that we thus achieved [from physics and biology] was very real, there was much that induced in us a considerable dismay. We were aware that to be dismayed was no indication of the untruth of what dismayed us. Indeed, we learned to take the scientific sentence pronounced upon us without even so much as a protest. Nevertheless it was a drastic sentence, for it deprived us of that which, in our civilized history, we had prized most greatly of all: our sense of significance (O 129).

[As we have realized in the more recent decades, there is nothing particularly joyous in an outcast relation to the universe (O 125).]

2:7.4 The false science of materialism would sentence mortal man to become an outcast in the universe.

Such partial knowledge is potentially evil; it is knowledge composed of both good and evil. Truth is beautiful because it is both replete and symmetrical.

X: THE FIRST ELEMENT: TRUTH:
REALITY AND THE TRUTH-
PROCESS (Overstreet 140)

One Basic Quest (Overstreet 149)

Most of reality still remains an unfathomed mystery, but even for us, small human beings fumbling about in this nursery stage of our existence, it seems not impossible to say that in pursuing the way of truth we are pursuing the way of reality (O 150).

When man searches for truth, he pursues the divinely real.

IX: THE PHILOSOPHIC TEST: THE
CRITERION OF ACTUALITY
(Overstreet 129)

[Preamble] (Overstreet 129)

In reviewing that heritage of ideas we seemed to find traces in it of gravely fallacious thinking. We noted chiefly the fallacy of abstraction, or of “misplaced concreteness,”

2:7.5 Philosophers commit their gravest error when they are misled into the fallacy of abstraction,

which consisted of concentrating upon one aspect of reality

the practice of focusing the attention upon one aspect of reality

and pronouncing that one aspect the whole (O 130).

and then of pronouncing such an isolated aspect to be the whole truth.

A Deeper Inquiry (Overstreet 132)

In a preceding chapter, we tried to indicate the “unreality” of the thing-minded person’s attitude toward the things of his world.... In order, then, to get a “real” view of his world of things, he would have to go back through the whole scheme of action which the thing implied to the initiating factors which brought it into being (O 134).

The wise philosopher will always look for the creative design which is behind, and pre-existent to, all universe phenomena.

The creator thought invariably precedes creative action.

X: THE FIRST ELEMENT: TRUTH:
REALITY AND THE TRUTH-
PROCESS (Overstreet 140)

2:7.6 Intellectual self-consciousness can discover the beauty of truth, its spiritual quality, not only by the philosophic consistency of its concepts, but more certainly and surely by the unerring response of the ever-present Spirit of Truth.

The Principle of Coherence (Overstreet 148)

Happiness ensues from the recognition of truth because

To discover enduring coherence and to bring enduring coherence into life is, apparently, to move toward reality. For coherence—so the long history of man seems to have shown—can be acted out (O 148).

it can be *acted out*; it can be lived.

Disappointment and sorrow attend upon error because, not being a reality, it cannot be realized in experience.

“SOWING FOR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE DIGESTIVE PROCESS” (Paulson&Sadler 610)

TRUTH KNOWN BY ITS FLAVOR (P&S 610)

Divine truth is best known by its *spiritual flavor*.⁷

Just as the Creator has put into every separate food a distinct and characteristic flavor which distinguishes it from every other food;

just as He has put flavors in foods, good and bad, which would, to the unperverted taste, be sufficient to rightly guide man in the selection of his daily food; so also the Lord has placed a *spiritual flavor* in every *divine truth* (P&S 610).

X: THE FIRST ELEMENT: TRUTH: REALITY AND THE TRUTH-PROCESS (Overstreet 140)

One Basic Quest (Overstreet 149)

[contd] We discover, then, the reason for one of the most continuing *quests* in human nature—the quest for *coherence*, the movement away from the fragmentary and disconnected to the connected and the *unified*.

The reason apparently lies in the fact that the *universe* is itself fundamentally a *coherent* system (O 149).

2:7.7 The *eternal quest* is for *unification*, for divine *coherence*.

The far-flung physical *universe* *coheres* in the Isle of Paradise; the intellectual *universe* *coheres* in the God of mind, the Conjoint Actor; the spiritual *universe* is *coherent* in the personality of the Eternal Son.

But the isolated mortal of time and space *coheres* in God the Father through the direct relationship between the indwelling Thought Adjuster and the Universal Father. Man's Adjuster is a fragment of God and everlastingly seeks for divine unification; it *coheres* with, and in, the Paradise Deity of the First Source and Center.

XI: THE SECOND ELEMENTAL:
BEAUTY: BEAUTY AS A LIFE-
 PRINCIPLE (Overstreet 152)

The Cosmic Basis (Overstreet 154)

For the scientist, as for the philosopher, these processes of nature have a profound and stirring beauty. The heavens show forth an **integration** so far transcending anything of human fashioning that they lift our emotions to another plane (O 155-56).

Above all and comprehending all, there was [for Plato] the trinity of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. The Good was the True, and the True was the Good. And always the **Good** and the **True** were the **Beautiful** (O 156).

The Significance of the Arts (Overstreet 158)

Every fine **art**, in greater or less degree, has this effect upon us. A great piece of sculpture is the organization of matter out of relative formlessness into significant form. It is a **unity** that has no distracting irrelevancies, a whole that animates all its parts and in which all the parts together animate the whole (O 159).

XII: THE THIRD ELEMENTAL: THE
 GOOD: THE OBJECTIVITY OF THE
 GOOD (Overstreet 162)

[Preamble] (Overstreet 162)

2:7.8 The discernment of supreme **beauty** is the discovery and **integration** of reality:

The discernment of the divine **goodness** in the eternal **truth**, that is ultimate **beauty**.

Even the charm of human **art** consists in the harmony of its **unity**.

2:7.9 The great mistake of the Hebrew religion was its failure to associate the goodness of God with the factual truths of science and the appealing beauty of art.

As civilization progressed,

The last thing we wish is to be “good.” We wish rather to be free, frank, adventurous. We wish to be happy. Our present rebellion against goodness is not difficult to understand. It is our reaction against a scheme of existence that has overstressed morality and left out of account two fundamental interests of life. In the first place, Christianity, as an institutionalized religion, has laid no stress upon the pursuit of truth....

It has also, in the main, been the foe of beauty-for-its-own-sake (O 162).

What we wish now is truth. We ask for the right to be fearless about it, to be frank and open, to be skeptical even if our skepticism leads to the overthrow of everything we have ever believed.

And we also wish beauty. Having been denied it, we wish it all the more ardently (O 163).

and since religion continued to pursue the same unwise course of overemphasizing the goodness of God to the relative exclusion of truth and neglect of beauty,

there developed an increasing tendency for certain types of men to turn away from the abstract and dissociated concept of isolated goodness.

The overstressed and isolated morality of modern religion, which fails to hold the devotion and loyalty of many twentieth-century men,

would rehabilitate itself if, in addition to its moral mandates, it would give equal consideration to

the truths of science, philosophy, and spiritual experience,

and to the beauties of the physical creation, the charm of intellectual art, and the grandeur of genuine character achievement.

2:7.10 The religious challenge of this age is to those farseeing and forward-looking men and women of spiritual insight who will dare to construct a new and appealing philosophy of living out of the enlarged and exquisitely integrated modern concepts of cosmic truth, universe beauty, and divine goodness. Such a new and righteous vision of morality will attract all that is good in the mind of man and challenge that which is best in the human soul. Truth, beauty, and goodness are divine realities, and as man ascends the scale of spiritual living, these supreme qualities of the Eternal become increasingly co-ordinated and unified in God, who is love.

2:7.11 All truth—material, philosophic, or spiritual—is both beautiful and good. All real beauty—material art or spiritual symmetry—is both true and good.

Perhaps if we confess at the outset that goodness without truth and beauty is never really goodness at all, we shall be permitted to continue. Goodness is a special kind of truth and beauty. It is truth and beauty in human behavior (O 163).

All genuine goodness—whether personal morality, social equity, or divine ministry—is equally true and beautiful.

The Principle of Integration (Overstreet 166)

Health is integration, the parts linked in harmonious working relation (O 167).

Health, sanity, and happiness are integrations of truth, beauty, and goodness as they are blended in human experience.

Such levels of efficient living come about through the unification of energy systems, idea systems, and spirit systems.

A truth-system, in short, as we noted in a previous chapter, is a coherence system (O 167).

2:7.12 Truth is coherent,

beauty attractive, goodness stabilizing. And when these values of that which is real are co-ordinated in personality experience, the result is a high order of love conditioned by wisdom and qualified by loyalty.

The Fundamental Need (Overstreet 169)

[contd] Human life, in brief, grows more adequate as it grows increasingly competent in the linking of itself with the various realities of its environment. If this is true, then the basic education of life should be a training in unification or integration. [Etc.] (O 169)

The real purpose of all universe education is to effect the better co-ordination of the isolated child of the worlds with the larger realities of his expanding experience.

Reality is finite on the human level, infinite and eternal on the higher and divine levels.

2:7.13 [Presented by a Divine Counselor acting by authority of the Ancients of Days on Uversa.]

1. In his *Analytical Study of Part I of the Urantia Book: Vol. 1: Papers 1-10*, written for the Urantia Brotherhood School in 1964, Sadler misidentified the latter clause. He wrote:

“With God all things are possible; the eternal Creator is the cause of causes.” This seems to be a double origin quotation:

A. Matt 19:26. “But with God all things are possible.”

B. A Hindu passage: “This universe has sprung from the Lord. In him it is established. He is the cause of creation.” Vishnu Purana 1.1.35.

2. [Compare:] This does not mean that God’s action will never change. On the contrary, it must change constantly to meet the ever varying needs of his government (William Adams Brown, *Christian Theology in Outline* [1906], p. 117). [Note: The following footnote quotes from the same passage in Brown.]

3. [Compare:] When we speak of the divine immutability we mean that the holy and loving character in whom we have put our trust can never change.

This does not mean that God's action will never change. On the contrary, it must change constantly to meet the ever varying needs of his government. And with the change will come corresponding changes in the divine experience. But the change will never be an arbitrary one. Back of the varying action and the changing experience lies the unchanging purpose, giving unity and consistency to all God does (William Adams Brown, *Christian Theology in Outline* [1906], p. 117).

4. From *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, Revised Edition* (1976):

The SDA view is that "the finally impenitent, including Satan, the author of sin, will, by the fires of the last day (after the millennium), be reduced to a state of nonexistence, becoming as though they had not been" (*Church Manual*, 1963, p. 32). This is the second death, from which there will be no resurrection (p. 580).

5. [Compare:] If you could only fathom the motives of your associates, how much better you would understand them. If you could only know your fellows, you would eventually fall in love with them (100:4.5).

6. Buddha, Krishna, Christ, are loved because they first loved man, and man feels himself dear to them (E. Washburn Hopkins, Ph.D., LL.D., *Origin and Evolution of Religion* [1923], p. 103-04).

7. Paulson premiered this concept in his article "Truth Is Known by Its Flavor," in the Sep. 17, 1899 issue of *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*.

John Harvey Kellogg expressed the concept here:

The fact must be recognized that somewhere within the mechanism of the human mind there is a faculty which recognizes truth by its properties, by the impression it makes, just as the gustatory sense recognizes flavors, and the olfactory sense odors. In other words, the common man recognizes truth by its flavor rather than by the application of the rules of logic or scientific inquiry ("Science Goes Mad," in *Good Health*, Vol. XLV, No. 8, Aug. 1910, p. 640).