

The Urantia Book

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Paper 38

Ministering Spirits of the Local Universe

38:0.1 (418.1) THERE are three distinct orders of the personalities of the Infinite Spirit. The impetuous apostle understood this when he wrote respecting Jesus, “who has gone to heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.” Angels are the ministering spirits of time; authorities, the messenger hosts of space; powers, the higher personalities of the Infinite Spirit.

38:0.2 (418.2) As the supernaphim in the central universe and the seconaphim in a superuniverse, so the seraphim, with the associated cherubim and sanobim, constitute the angelic corps of a local universe.

38:0.3 (418.3) The seraphim are all fairly uniform in design. From universe to universe, throughout all seven of the superuniverses, they show a minimum of variation; they are the most nearly standard of all spirit types

of personal beings. Their various orders constitute the corps of the skilled and common ministers of the local creations.

1. Origin of Seraphim

38:1.1 (418.4) Seraphim are created by the Universe Mother Spirit and have been projected in unit formation—41,472 at a time—ever since the creation of the “pattern angels” and certain angelic archetypes in the early times of Nebadon. The Creator Son and the universe representation of the Infinite Spirit collaborate in the creation of a large number of Sons and other universe personalities. Following the completion of this united effort, the Son engages in the creation of the Material Sons, the first of the sex creatures, while the Universe Mother Spirit concurrently engages in her initial solitary effort at spirit reproduction. Thus begins the creation of the seraphic hosts of a local universe.

38:1.2 (418.5) These angelic orders are projected at the time of planning for the evolution of mortal will creatures. The creation of seraphim dates from the attainment of relative personality by the Universe Mother Spirit, not as the later co-ordinate of the Master Son, but as the early creative helper of the Creator Son. Previous to this event the seraphim on duty in Nebadon were temporarily loaned by a neighboring universe.

38:1.3 (418.6) Seraphim are still being periodically created; the universe of Nebadon is still in the making. The Universe Mother Spirit never ceases creative activity in a growing and perfecting universe.

2. Angelic Natures

38:2.1 (419.1) Angels do not have material bodies, but they are definite and discrete beings; they are of spirit nature and origin. Though invisible to mortals, they perceive you as you are in the flesh without the aid of transformers or translators; they intellectually understand the mode of mortal life, and they share all of man's nonsensuous emotions and sentiments. They appreciate and greatly enjoy your efforts in music, art, and real humor. They are fully cognizant of your moral struggles and spiritual difficulties. They love human beings, and only good can result from your efforts to understand and love them.

38:2.2 (419.2) Though seraphim are very affectionate and sympathetic beings, they are not sex-emotion creatures. They are much as you will be on the mansion worlds, where you will "neither marry nor be given in marriage but will be as the angels of heaven." For all who "shall be accounted worthy to attain the mansion worlds neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither do they die any more, for they are equal to the angels." Nevertheless, in dealing with sex creatures it is our custom to speak of those beings of more direct descent from the Father and the Son as the sons of God, while referring to the children of the Spirit as the daughters of God. Angels are, therefore, commonly designated by feminine pronouns on the sex planets.

38:2.3 (419.3) The seraphim are so created as to function on both spiritual and literal levels. There are few phases of morontia or spirit activity which

are not open to their ministrations. While in personal status angels are not so far removed from human beings, in certain functional performances seraphim far transcend them. They possess many powers far beyond human comprehension. For example: You have been told that the “very hairs of your head are numbered,” and it is true they are, but a seraphim does not spend her time counting them and keeping the number corrected up to date. Angels possess inherent and automatic (that is, automatic as far as you could perceive) powers of knowing such things; you would truly regard a seraphim as a mathematical prodigy. Therefore, numerous duties which would be tremendous tasks for mortals are performed with exceeding ease by seraphim.

38:2.4 (419.4) Angels are superior to you in spiritual status, but they are not your judges or accusers. No matter what your faults, “the angels, although greater in power and might, bring no accusation against you.” Angels do not sit in judgment on mankind, neither should individual mortals prejudge their fellow creatures.

38:2.5 (419.5) You do well to love them, but you should not adore them; angels are not objects of worship. The great seraphim, Loyalatia, when your seer “fell down to worship before the feet of the angel,” said: “See that you do it not; I am a fellow servant with you and with your races, who are all enjoined to worship God.”

38:2.6 (419.6) In nature and personality endowment the seraphim are just a trifle ahead of mortal races in the scale of creature existence. Indeed, when you are delivered from the flesh, you become very much like them. On the mansion worlds you will begin to appreciate the seraphim, on the

constellation spheres to enjoy them, while on Salvington they will share their places of rest and worship with you. Throughout the whole morontia and subsequent spirit ascent, your fraternity with the seraphim will be ideal; your companionship will be superb.

3. Unrevealed Angels

38:3.1 (420.1) Numerous orders of spirit beings function throughout the domains of the local universe that are unrevealed to mortals because they are in no manner connected with the evolutionary plan of Paradise ascension. In this paper the word “angel” is purposely limited to the designation of those seraphic and associated offspring of the Universe Mother Spirit who are so largely concerned with the operation of the plans of mortal survival. There serve in the local universe six other orders of related beings, the unrevealed angels, who are not in any specific manner connected with those universe activities pertaining to the Paradise ascent of evolutionary mortals. These six groups of angelic associates are never called seraphim, neither are they referred to as ministering spirits. These personalities are wholly occupied with the administrative and other affairs of Nebadon, engagements which are in no way related to man’s progressive career of spiritual ascent and perfection attainment.

4. The Seraphic Worlds

38:4.1 (420.2) The ninth group of seven primary spheres in the Salvington circuit are the worlds of the seraphim. Each of these worlds has six tributary satellites, whereon are the special schools devoted to all phases of seraphic training. While the seraphim have access to all forty-nine worlds comprising this group of Salvington spheres, they exclusively occupy only the first cluster of seven. The remaining six clusters are occupied by the six orders of angelic associates unrevealed on Urantia; each such group maintains headquarters on one of these six primary worlds and carries on specialized activities on the six tributary satellites. Each angelic order has free access to all the worlds of these seven diverse groups.

38:4.2 (420.3) These headquarters worlds are among the magnificent realms of Nebadon; the seraphic estates are characterized by both beauty and vastness. Here each seraphim has a real home, and “home” means the domicile of two seraphim; they live in pairs.

38:4.3 (420.4) Though not male and female as are the Material Sons and the mortal races, seraphim are negative and positive. In the majority of assignments it requires two angels to accomplish the task. When they are not encircuited, they can work alone; neither do they require complements of being when stationary. Ordinarily they retain their original complements of being, but not necessarily. Such associations are primarily necessitated by function; they are not characterized by sex emotion, though they are exceedingly personal and truly affectionate.

38:4.4 (420.5) Besides designated homes, seraphim also have group, company, battalion, and unit headquarters. They forgather for reunions every millennium and are all present in accordance with the time of their creation. If a seraphim bears responsibilities which forbid absence from

duty, she alternates attendance with her complement, being relieved by a seraphim of another birth date. Each seraphic partner is thereby present at least every other reunion.

5. Seraphic Training

38:5.1 (420.6) Seraphim spend their first millennium as noncommissioned observers on Salvington and its associated world schools. The second millennium is spent on the seraphic worlds of the Salvington circuit. Their central training school is now presided over by the first one hundred thousand Nebadon seraphim, and at their head is the original or first-born angel of this local universe. The first created group of Nebadon seraphim were trained by a corps of one thousand seraphim from Avalon; subsequently our angels have been taught by their own seniors. The Melchizedeks also have a large part in the education and training of all local universe angels—seraphim, cherubim, and sanobim.

38:5.2 (421.1) At the termination of this period of training on the seraphic worlds of Salvington, seraphim are mobilized in the conventional groups and units of the angelic organization and are assigned to some one of the constellations. They are not yet commissioned as ministering spirits, although they have well entered upon the precommissioned phases of angelic training.

38:5.3 (421.2) Seraphim are initiated as ministering spirits by serving as observers on the lowest of the evolutionary worlds. After this experience they return to the associate worlds of the headquarters of the assigned

constellation to begin their advanced studies and more definitely to prepare for service in some particular local system. Following this general education they are advanced to the service of some one of the local systems. On the architectural worlds associated with the capital of some Nebadon system our seraphim complete their training and are commissioned as ministering spirits of time.

38:5.4 (421.3) When once seraphim are commissioned, they may range all Nebadon, even Orvonton, on assignment. Their work in the universe is without bounds and limitations; they are closely associated with the material creatures of the worlds and are ever in the service of the lower orders of spiritual personalities, making contact between these beings of the spirit world and the mortals of the material realms.

6. Seraphic Organization

38:6.1 (421.4) After the second millennium of sojourn at seraphic headquarters the seraphim are organized under chiefs into groups of twelve (12 pairs, 24 seraphim), and twelve such groups constitute a company (144 pairs, 288 seraphim), which is commanded by a leader. Twelve companies under a commander constitute a battalion (1,728 pairs or 3,456 seraphim), and twelve battalions under a director equal a seraphic unit (20,736 pairs or 41,472 individuals), while twelve units, subject to the command of a supervisor, constitute a legion numbering 248,832 pairs or 497,664 individuals. Jesus alluded to such a group of angels that night in the garden

of Gethsemane when he said: “I can even now ask my Father, and he will presently give me more than twelve legions of angels.”

38:6.2 (421.5) Twelve legions of angels comprise a host numbering 2,985,984 pairs or 5,971,968 individuals, and twelve such hosts (35,831,808 pairs or 71,663,616 individuals) make up the largest operating organization of seraphim, an angelic army. A seraphic host is commanded by an archangel or by some other personality of co-ordinate status, while the angelic armies are directed by the Brilliant Evening Stars or by other immediate lieutenants of Gabriel. And Gabriel is the “supreme commander of the armies of heaven,” the chief executive of the Sovereign of Nebadon, “the Lord God of hosts.”

38:6.3 (421.6) Though serving under the direct supervision of the Infinite Spirit as personalized on Salvington, since the bestowal of Michael on Urantia, seraphim and all other local universe orders have become subject to the sovereignty of the Master Son. Even when Michael was born of the flesh on Urantia, there issued the superuniverse broadcast to all Nebadon which proclaimed, “And let all the angels worship him.” All ranks of angels are subject to his sovereignty; they are a part of that group which has been denominated “his mighty angels.”

7. Cherubim and Sanobim

38:7.1 (422.1) In all essential endowments cherubim and sanobim are similar to seraphim. They have the same origin but not always the same destiny. They are wonderfully intelligent, marvelously efficient, touchingly

affectionate, and almost human. They are the lowest order of angels, hence all the nearer of kin to the more progressive types of human beings on the evolutionary worlds.

38:7.2 (422.2) Cherubim and sanobim are inherently associated, functionally united. One is an energy positive personality; the other, energy negative. The right-hand deflector, or positively charged angel, is the cherubim—the senior or controlling personality. The left-hand deflector, or negatively charged angel, is the sanobim—the complement of being. Each type of angel is very limited in solitary function; hence they usually serve in pairs. When serving independently of their seraphic directors, they are more than ever dependent on mutual contact and always function together.

38:7.3 (422.3) Cherubim and sanobim are the faithful and efficient aids of the seraphic ministers, and all seven orders of seraphim are provided with these subordinate assistants. Cherubim and sanobim serve for ages in these capacities, but they do not accompany seraphim on assignments beyond the confines of the local universe.

38:7.4 (422.4) The cherubim and sanobim are the routine spirit workers on the individual worlds of the systems. On a nonpersonal assignment and in an emergency, they may serve in the place of a seraphic pair, but they never function, even temporarily, as attending angels to human beings; that is an exclusive seraphic privilege.

38:7.5 (422.5) When assigned to a planet, cherubim enter the local courses of training, including a study of planetary usages and languages. The ministering spirits of time are all bilingual, speaking the language of the local universe of their origin and that of their native superuniverse. By

study in the schools of the realms they acquire additional tongues.

Cherubim and sanobim, like seraphim and all other orders of spirit beings, are continuously engaged in efforts at self-improvement. Only such as the subordinate beings of power control and energy direction are incapable of progression; all creatures having actual or potential personality volition seek new achievements.

38:7.6 (422.6) Cherubim and sanobim are by nature very near the morontia level of existence, and they prove to be most efficient in the borderland work of the physical, morontial, and spiritual domains. These children of the local universe Mother Spirit are characterized by “fourth creatures” much as are the Havona Servitals and the conciliating commissions. Every fourth cherubim and every fourth sanobim are quasi-material, very definitely resembling the morontia level of existence.

38:7.7 (422.7) These angelic fourth creatures are of great assistance to the seraphim in the more literal phases of their universe and planetary activities. Such morontia cherubim also perform many indispensable borderline tasks on the morontia training worlds and are assigned to the service of the Morontia Companions in large numbers. They are to the morontia spheres about what the midway creatures are to the evolutionary planets. On the inhabited worlds these morontia cherubim frequently work in liaison with the midway creatures. Cherubim and midway creatures are distinctly separate orders of beings; they have dissimilar origins, but they disclose great similarity in nature and function.

8. Evolution of Cherubim and Sanobim

38:8.1 (423.1) Numerous avenues of advancing service are open to cherubim and sanobim leading to an enhancement of status, which may be still further augmented by the embrace of the Divine Minister. There are three great classes of cherubim and sanobim with regard to evolutionary potential:

38:8.2 (423.2) 1. *Ascension Candidates*. These beings are by nature candidates for seraphic status. Cherubim and sanobim of this order are brilliant, though not by inherent endowment equal to the seraphim; but by application and experience it is possible for them to attain full seraphic standing.

38:8.3 (423.3) 2. *Mid-phase Cherubim*. All cherubim and sanobim are not equal in ascension potential, and these are the inherently limited beings of the angelic creations. Most of them will remain cherubim and sanobim, although the more gifted individuals may achieve limited seraphic service.

38:8.4 (423.4) 3. *Morontia Cherubim*. These “fourth creatures” of the angelic orders always retain their quasi-material characteristics. They will continue on as cherubim and sanobim, together with a majority of their mid-phase brethren, pending the completed factualization of the Supreme Being.

38:8.5 (423.5) While the second and third groups are somewhat limited in growth potential, the ascension candidates may attain the heights of universal seraphic service. Many of the more experienced of these cherubim are attached to the seraphic guardians of destiny and are thus placed in

direct line for advancement to the status of Mansion World Teachers when deserted by their seraphic seniors. Guardians of destiny do not have cherubim and sanobim as helpers when their mortal wards attain the morontia life. And when other types of evolutionary seraphim are granted clearance for Seraphington and Paradise, they must forsake their former subordinates when they pass out of the confines of Nebadon. Such deserted cherubim and sanobim are usually embraced by the Universe Mother Spirit, thus achieving a level equivalent to that of a Mansion World Teacher in the attainment of seraphic status.

38:8.6 (423.6) When, as Mansion World Teachers, the once-embraced cherubim and sanobim have long served on the morontia spheres, from the lowest to the highest, and when their corps on Salvington is overrecruited, the Bright and Morning Star summons these faithful servants of the creatures of time to appear in his presence. The oath of personality transformation is administered; and thereupon, in groups of seven thousand, these advanced and senior cherubim and sanobim are re-embraced by the Universe Mother Spirit. From this second embrace they emerge as full-fledged seraphim. Henceforth, the full and complete career of a seraphim, with all of its Paradise possibilities, is open to such reborn cherubim and sanobim. Such angels may be assigned as guardians of destiny to some mortal being, and if the mortal ward attains survival, then do they become eligible for advancement to Seraphington and the seven circles of seraphic attainment, even to Paradise and the Corps of the Finality.

9. The Midway Creatures

38:9.1 (424.1) The midway creatures have a threefold classification: They are properly classified with the ascending Sons of God; they are factually grouped with the orders of permanent citizenship, while they are functionally reckoned with the ministering spirits of time because of their intimate and effective association with the angelic hosts in the work of serving mortal man on the individual worlds of space.

38:9.2 (424.2) These unique creatures appear on the majority of the inhabited worlds and are always found on the decimal or life-experiment planets, such as Urantia. Midwayers are of two types—primary and secondary—and they appear by the following techniques:

38:9.3 (424.3) 1. *Primary Midwayers*, the more spiritual group, are a somewhat standardized order of beings who are uniformly derived from the modified ascendant-mortal staffs of the Planetary Princes. The number of primary midway creatures is always fifty thousand, and no planet enjoying their ministry has a larger group.

38:9.4 (424.4) 2. *Secondary Midwayers*, the more material group of these creatures, vary greatly in numbers on the different worlds, though the average is around fifty thousand. They are variously derived from the planetary biologic uplifters, the Adams and Eves, or from their immediate progeny. There are no less than twenty-four diverse techniques involved in the production of these secondary midway creatures on the evolutionary worlds of space. The mode of origin for this group on Urantia was unusual and extraordinary.

38:9.5 (424.5) Neither of these groups is an evolutionary accident; both are essential features in the predetermined plans of the universe architects, and their appearance on the evolving worlds at the opportune juncture is in accordance with the original designs and developmental plans of the supervising Life Carriers.

38:9.6 (424.6) Primary midwayers are energized intellectually and spiritually by the angelic technique and are uniform in intellectual status. The seven adjutant mind-spirits make no contact with them; and only the sixth and the seventh, the spirit of worship and the spirit of wisdom, are able to minister to the secondary group.

38:9.7 (424.7) Secondary midwayers are physically energized by the Adamic technique, spiritually encircuited by the seraphic, and intellectually endowed with the morontia transition type of mind. They are divided into four physical types, seven orders spiritually, and twelve levels of intellectual response to the joint ministry of the last two adjutant spirits and the morontia mind. These diversities determine their differential of activity and of planetary assignment.

38:9.8 (424.8) Primary midwayers resemble angels more than mortals; the secondary orders are much more like human beings. Each renders invaluable assistance to the other in the execution of their manifold planetary assignments. The primary ministers can achieve liaison cooperation with both morontia- and spirit-energy controllers and mind circuiters. The secondary group can establish working connections only with the physical controllers and the material-circuit manipulators. But since each order of midwayer can establish perfect synchrony of contact with the other, either group is thereby able to achieve practical utilization of

the entire energy gamut extending from the gross physical power of the material worlds up through the transition phases of universe energies to the higher spirit-reality forces of the celestial realms.

38:9.9 (425.1) The gap between the material and spiritual worlds is perfectly bridged by the serial association of mortal man, secondary midwayer, primary midwayer, morontia cherubim, mid-phase cherubim, and seraphim. In the personal experience of an individual mortal these diverse levels are undoubtedly more or less unified and made personally meaningful by the unobserved and mysterious operations of the divine Thought Adjuster.

38:9.10 (425.2) On normal worlds the primary midwayers maintain their service as the intelligence corps and as celestial entertainers in behalf of the Planetary Prince, while the secondary ministers continue their co-operation with the Adamic regime of furthering the cause of progressive planetary civilization. In case of the defection of the Planetary Prince and the failure of the Material Son, as occurred on Urantia, the midway creatures become the wards of the System Sovereign and serve under the directing guidance of the acting custodian of the planet. But on only three other worlds in Satania do these beings function as one group under unified leadership as do the united midway ministers of Urantia.

38:9.11 (425.3) The planetary work of both primary and secondary midwayers is varied and diverse on the numerous individual worlds of a universe, but on the normal and average planets their activities are very different from the duties which occupy their time on isolated spheres, such as Urantia.

38:9.12 (425.4) The primary midwayers are the planetary historians who, from the time of the arrival of the Planetary Prince to the age of settled light and life, formulate the pageants and design the portrayals of planetary history for the exhibits of the planets on the system headquarters worlds.

38:9.13 (425.5) Midwayers remain for long periods on an inhabited world, but if faithful to their trust, they will eventually and most certainly be recognized for their agelong service in maintaining the sovereignty of the Creator Son; they will be duly rewarded for their patient ministry to the material mortals on their world of time and space. Sooner or later all accredited midway creatures will be mustered into the ranks of the ascending Sons of God and will be duly initiated into the long adventure of the Paradise ascent in company with those very mortals of animal origin, their earth brethren, whom they so jealously guarded and so effectively served during the long planetary sojourn.

38:9.14 (425.6) [Presented by a Melchizedek acting by request of the Chief of the Seraphic Hosts of Nebadon.]