

## **Forty Days and Forty Nights**

An article in Innerface International by Ken Glasziou

A previous article in this issue discussed the strange and quite astonishing error in Part 4 of The Urantia Book regarding its use of a forty day interval elapsing between the time of Jesus crucifixion on the eve of the Jewish Passover and the time of his ascension on the day appointed for the feast of Pentecost. This ancient Jewish harvest festival came seven weeks and one day after Passover, a fifty day period that derived its name from the Greek word "pentekostos" which means fifty days.

### **One must be wrong**

The Paper provides the date of Passover as April 8 AD 30, and the date for Pentecost as May 18 AD 30, an interval of forty days being the elapsed time between the two dates. At least one of the dates must be wrong, probably the last one as judged from astronomical evidence.

### **On saying forty but meaning fifty**

The dates for the period prior to the crucifixion are well catalogued in the Urantia Paper, as are the day of the week and its actual date for the following period up to and including the day of ascension. There is no way of accounting for the forty day error as due to being a copying, typing, or copy editing error. Neither can the forty day interval be a simple mistake by someone writing forty when they really meant fifty, as it is repeated three times and in a different context for each occasion.

The first is in relation to a forty day interval that Jesus passed with the Morontia Directors (2040), the second refers to Jesus' morontia career (2057) and the third to the forty days during which the apostles were in hiding after the crucifixion. (2060). And this last reference occurs in the first line under the section heading entitled "The Pentecost Sermon,"--which surely must alert some readers to the occurrence of an inconsistency.

### **Date for Easter also changes annually**

Many Urantia Book readers, with or without a Christian background, would be aware that the Easter holiday period varies each year because it follows the Jewish tradition for Passover which is fixed by the first new moon following the March equinox. In our earlier article, wonderment was expressed about how the error apparently went undetected by those who read the Papers prior to first printing and how the Midwayers responsible for Part 4 could make such an error--if indeed it was an error. An alternative is that the revelators meant to put it there for some logical reason.

### **Forty days and forty nights in the Bible**

An examination of the phrase "forty days" in both the Old and New Testament and even The Urantia Book provides a possible clue. The Bible has twenty two "forty day" references, most being associated with events of significance in Jewish history. These range from the great flood and Noah's survival, the period of embalming of the body of Jacob (alias Israel) prior to the return of his body to Canaan, the period that Moses spent on the mount when receiving the ten commandments, a period for exploration of the promised land, a period during which the Philistine giant, Goliath, paraded before the Israelites chiding them until slain by David with a stone from his

sling. In the New Testament, there was the forty days of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness and the forty days of his appearances after the resurrection.

It seems highly unlikely that a majority of these periods were exactly forty days. If not then perhaps "forty days" is a symbolic term that was attached to significant events of modest duration in Jewish history. An additional "forty day" interval occurs in The Urantia Book as a kind of rest and resuscitation period following directly after the fusion event for our morontia selves with our Thought Adjuster.

### **Forty days as a symbol**

Did the revelators choose to use an intensely symbolic "forty day" period to describe the interval between Passover and Pentecost, even though it meant that they would introduce error for their dates? If so, were they also drawing attention to their use of symbolism, legend, parable, allegory, mythology, and "what have you" throughout The Urantia Book to describe and illustrate what is essentially a universe frame (1260) in which we can think rationally about our place and purpose in the universe. My personal opinion is that this is exactly what they did.

They appear to have attempted to tell us so in the explanation of the mandate, their use of human sources wherever possible, and their description of the Urantia Papers on page 1008.

The "forty day" error is the last, the most obvious, and the most conclusive in the Urantia Papers. It is followed by some of their most magnificent material. It appears to be impossible to assume this particular error is not there for a very good reason.

### **Further Notes on the 40-day error: Dr Sadler knew about it!:**

This problem was discussed in correspondence dated March 9, 1959 between Dr Sadler and Dr Earl L. Douglass, whose expertise was biblical studies. It makes it clear that Dr. Sadler and associates were aware of the problem **prior to the book being printed.**

Dr Sadler offers the comment that perhaps the noonday meeting described at the end of Paper 193 was not the same meeting as described at the beginning of Paper 194.

An intensive and detailed examination of the evidence indicates that this cannot be. The number of people is the same--120 believers. Paper 193, concludes with the apostles returning to the upper room about noon having chosen Matthias to replace Judas. Paper 194 commences with the believers, at about one o'clock becoming aware of a strange presence in the room.

The meeting mentioned in both Papers was between the apostles and the one hundred and twenty foremost disciples in Jerusalem. Included are Jesus' mother and family members.

Dr Sadler's proffered explanation falters in the very first paragraph of Paper 194, Section 1, "The Pentecost Sermon" which reads, "The apostles had been in hiding for forty days." Read in context, it means what it says and not that, "Up until ten days ago, the apostles had been in hiding for forty days"--which is what would be expected

if the meeting took place at fifty and not forty days after Jesus' crucifixion (the expectation if the meetings are not the same one).

Further along in this same paragraph, "the frightened apostles emerged from their weeks of seclusion to appear boldly in the temple...." According to Dr Sadler's explanation they must have actually come out of hiding ten days earlier! So why are they still frightened yet no longer in hiding?

The facts given at the end of Paper 193 and the beginning of Paper 194 are a perfect fit if they refer to the same meeting. They are at variance with those facts if we try to make them fit to the "independent meetings" hypothesis.

### **Why was it not corrected?**

Independently of all this, we must ask why the error was not corrected prior to printing. The authors were the midwayers who are located on Urantia. This same group is credited with a major role in the receipt of the Papers because of their ability to penetrate the human mind and to mediate communication via our Thought Adjusters.

There is no reason to believe that the midwayers no longer have this ability. And what about that noble group, the Reserve Corps of Destiny? Why did they not step in to address this disastrous forty day error, or at least mediate an explanation? And in any case, if there is just a modicum of truth in what is supposed to have happened at 533 Diversey Parkway prior to the book's printing, then our celestial supervisors could have found ways to fix the problem.