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THE URANTIA BOOK: A Guide To the Future and Beyond

by

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URANTIA

Contemplation of the future can be an exciting and adventurous part of life, an activity that is as useful as it is natural, useful in making decisions and natural in attempting to satisfy curiosity. Also, futuristic thinking, in the broadest and highest sense, is a unique pursuit of human personality. In making a decision, an animal's selective response is limited to the motor level of behavior. However, "man is able to exercise scientific, moral, and spiritual insight prior to all exploration or experimentation. Only a personality can know what it is doing before it does it; only personalities possess insight in advance of experience. A personality can look before it leaps and can therefore learn from looking as well as from leaping". [page 1931]

In striving for some understanding about our origin, nature, and destiny, we attempt to evaluate the past and to forecast the future. Utilization of the mind to probe the mysteries of future time and space certainly seems appropriate. However, my own experiences and insights have led me to be aware of some distinctions between contemplation and anticipation. Actions based upon overly serious anticipation or mis-directed expectations may impede a natural flow of events and affect the future adversely. By contrast, careful contemplation should lead to some degree of wisdom concerning dynamic growth and the potentialities for expanding knowledge and truth. I am persuaded that life and

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evolution are progressive rather than cyclic and that some near-future transitions are more likely to be quantum jumps than gradual developments. We should manifest an openness that permits us to gracefully incorporate changes as they occur rather than always attempting to anticipate and manipulate them.

Perhaps truth-seeking futurists really need to consider investigating some nonradiational alternative sources. More specifically, I suggest that assistance may be available in the form of divine revelation at appropriate intervals. Actually such revelation as a personal human experience is continuous while "Revelation as an epochal phenomenon is periodic". [page 1107] However, certain levels of awareness and cosmic consciousness are required for either the individual insight or the major breakthrough of expanding truth. Unfortunately, it is more often the case that "error is so great that its rectification by revelation would be fatal to those slowly emerging truths which are essential to its experiential overthrow". [pages 554-555] In other words, our revelations will ever await our preparation. Perhaps we should, both individually and collectively, develop some patterns of future thought consistent with these realizations. \*

I observe that some of the most crucial as well as fertile areas of exploration for the futurist are lying dormant and almost unrecognized. It seems appropriate to issue a challenge, a call to all who can

hear, to devote time and energy to matters of an eternal and consistent nature; to values and meanings; to ideals concerned with the unification of body, mind, and spirit; and to the integration of science, philosophy, and religion in the highest and purest sense. In particular, "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". [page 43] \*

Rather than being irredeemably stalled on philosophic and theologic debates over the existence of God and of a creative scheme of life and cosmology, men and women of intelligence and good will should consider assuming these basic matters and proceed to study the consequences of their assumptions. Further, these investigations, by no means unique in any general way, must break free of the constraints that have plagued religionists throughout the history of the planet. "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." [page 43] I am convinced that there are scientific, philosophic, and \*

religious unifications in almost endless profusion simply awaiting discovery and which will collectively alter the course of history and the nature of life for every human being on the face of the earth. For a variety of reasons that I cannot begin to consider here, this planet has long been in a state of quarantine. But there are signs of a gradual lifting of this curtain of forced isolation, and the glimpses afford majestic patterns and living truths heretofore only approximated by shadowy visions. For me, this is the future in the highest and deepest sense. Furthermore, the potentialities of which I speak transcend even the time-fettered concept of the future and contain sequentiality as only a useful but limited aspect of expanded reality! The domain of time and space, together with the finite nature of our earth-bound capabilities, provide the setting within which we must live and grow and work; but any investigations of deity, divinity, and eternal life cannot accept such boundary conditions. Also, we must recognize that "religious experience, being essentially spiritual, can never be fully understood by the material mind". [page 69] "The difficulties and paradoxes of religion are inherent in the fact that the realities of religion are utterly beyond the mortal capacity for intellectual comprehension." [page 69] Nevertheless, within the confines of these kinds of realization, there is still much to be discovered, both intellectually and experientially; and, in fact, there are no ultimate limitations except man's own self-imposed timidity. \*

Suppose that, by some technique, the very highest, most perceptive and truthful human insights could be collected and then formulated into a consistent rendition for all men to study and analyze. The source of

each gem of wisdom would be relatively unimportant; each would find its proper place in the whole by withstanding the tests of beauty, truth, and goodness on as many levels of reality as the current evolving consciousness of man has experience for evaluation. Suppose, further, that some new information is made available for transition, for completion of partial concepts, and for extensions within the grasp of human understanding. Would the populace of this beleaguered little planet be able to adjust to the new levels of both understanding and responsibility? I regard both the supposition and the question as being of the utmost importance because, incredibly, what I am describing has occurred! But before I explain, I must digress by almost two thousand years and point out that the life and teachings of Jesus exhibited essentially the characteristics of the supposition. Jesus was familiar with the very frontiers of knowledge and understanding in the realms of science, philosophy, and religion; his insights and utterances reflected the most profound and truthful aspects of these conceptualizations. Further, Jesus clarified and expanded these values into a dynamic pattern for progressive living and cosmic awareness that has at least partially survived even amidst the harshest possible distortions, extremely misguided fanaticism, extraneous ideas, and mistaken concepts. I am quite certain that the life and teachings of Jesus constitute a revelation of epochal significance intended to benefit all mortal beings participating in the evolutionary development of life on earth. I am also persuaded that other revelations of such significance occurred prior to the time of Jesus; but the details of these have been all but lost and buried in

antiquity. Each of these has occurred due to a great and cumulative need for redirection of human understanding and reconsideration of human values, a need best met by a sifting of truth from error and a concurrent revelation to enhance and to expand that development. Such is the nature of the pattern of the interwoven development of evolution and revelation, the latter occurring when necessary and to an extent commensurate with the current evolutionary state. Thus, such an occurrence of epochal significance must be both subtle and profound, both gentle and strong, both acceptable and incredible.

Now, if these observations expressed only my own combined perceptions and faith, there would be little else to add. I might urge others to seek personal and spiritual experience as the most reliable guide not only to the future but beyond to the ultimate potentiality of eternal life. To say anything more could be at worst counterproductive or at best ineffectual since the seeking and the finding are necessarily matters of personal experience that can only be assisted but not completed through physical and intellectual efforts. However, at this particular time in the history of planetary evolution and with a calculated absence of fanfare, a revelation of epochal significance has occurred and is slowly but effectively permeating the consciousness of anyone willing to suspend disbelief, approach it with an open mind, and ultimately realize the extraordinary significance of the discovery.

I am speaking of The URANTIA Book and I will proceed to make some comments about this unprecedented, altogether astounding, and totally unique work that will one day be recognized as the most important

document ever to appear in the history of mankind on this planet. I shall hereafter attempt to refrain from further exclamatory adjectives or overextended praise; I cannot possibly do justice to the phenomenon that is The URANTIA Book and, furthermore, this treatise can stand on its own merits with no need of supporting rhetoric.

It would be both presumptuous and irresponsible of me to attempt in a brief space or time to describe The URANTIA Book. This should be neither surprising nor disconcerting since the nature and scope of The URANTIA Book could not possibly be represented by any sort of synopsis or paraphrase. It must be read, studied, and, ultimately, experienced in order to be grasped on any but the most superficial levels. I can only tell you about it; you must then explore the further dynamics, surpassing mere intellectual realizations that are communicable, on your own. These characteristics of the URANTIA Papers - The URANTIA Book actually consists of one-hundred and ninety-six separate papers - are, upon reflection and realizations that accompany the experience of the book, entirely appropriate. The magnitude and grandeur of this work encompass an expensive proposition for the reader, the cost including an increasing dedication, a growing faith, a genuine openness, a sincere attitude, and an expanding reality. Many persons will encounter The URANTIA Book only briefly and not be drawn further; many others will tarry a while and move away; a few will experience an overpowering realization of its importance. And these few will communicate with others, generally only with those who they feel might understand, for The URANTIA Book instills in the sincere student a deep



feeling of both commitment and responsibility. The commitment is to a way of living consistent with the concept of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; the responsibility is to protect the integrity of The URANTIA Book lest it share the fate of other revelations of similar significance. Word has spread only by person-to-person contact of one form of another; that is, The URANTIA Book has never been advertised nor even so much as reviewed in a national publication. It has been determined that any such treatment would endanger both its future and its gradual but ultimate significance and impact. By this communication, I am approaching the very limit of "advertisement"; and I do this only after soul-searching and prayerful consideration. I sincerely and respectfully appeal to you to examine The URANTIA Book in your own way and react as you will towards it. I would certainly not expect you to embrace the book and its insights, teachings, and information on my counsel alone. This would indicate both gullibility on your part and a misguided anticipation on mine. However, I also trust that you will not attempt to judge it until and unless you have read it.

The URANTIA Book was published and copyrighted in 1955 by The URANTIA Foundation in Chicago, Illinois. The modest financial records of The URANTIA Foundation, the operations of which are carried out by a staff of volunteers, are public record. It is quite natural to inquire about the authorship and inditement of the URANTIA Papers, and I wish to anticipate and discuss these matters before proceeding. First, in as calm

and straightforward a manner as possible, I will tell you this: The authorship is attributed to a group of superhuman beings whose existence has heretofore been unrealized by modern man on this planet. The material in The URANTIA Book dates from 1934. An unidentified human being, who is mentioned briefly in several varied contexts in the book, was involved in some unspecified way. Now, I am certainly aware of the difficulties inherent in both this information and the lack of supporting evidence or details; I have expended some time and thought on these concerns. My conclusions are as follows. I assert that once you have discovered the dynamic, flawless, and completely consistent nature of the URANTIA Papers, you will realize that the logistics of the communication are actually quite irrelevant just as you will realize that it is somewhat more difficult to logically conclude that this could be the work of a mortal earth-bound being than it is to scientifically accept the notion of extra-terrestrial authorship. Furthermore, I believe that if there was significance in the means by which the URANTIA Papers came into being, then this information would have been included. Likewise, that which is in the book is intentional and sufficiently explanatory; to have gone further would have been counterproductive to the purposes and nature of The URANTIA Book.

I now wish to introduce some basic information conveyed by The URANTIA Book. First of all, Urantia is the name of our planet earth in

a larger cosmological reckoning than we have heretofore known. This is one of about ten million inhabited or inhabitable planets, currently at various stages of evolutionary progress, composing what is known as a local universe. Our local universe, Nebadon, is the creative work of Michael, a being belonging to a class known as Creator Sons. Michael, according to plan, culminated his creative act by living a relatively ordinary life as one of the time-space-planet-bound beings on a selected world at a certain stage in evolution. The chosen planet, otherwise fairly undistinguished, was Urantia; and Michael lived and died here as Jesus of Nazareth.

Approximately one-hundred thousand local universes comprise a super-universe of which there are seven. This represents about seven trillion inhabited or inhabitable planets on which dwell an extraordinary variety of different types of beings with the common characteristic of being of one family, the family of God, the Universal Father. The URANTIA Book describes a vast array of cosmological data while at the same time presenting a consistent, highly intelligent and insightful, philosophy of life and reality that covers and unifies the highest and best concepts of material existence - science; of intellectual potential - philosophy; and of spiritual realization - religion. The URANTIA Book is in four major parts. Part One, consisting of thirty-one papers, is entitled "The Central and Superuniverses"; Part Two, consisting of twenty-five papers, is entitled "The Local Universe"; Part Three, consisting of sixty-three papers, is entitled "The History of Urantia"; and Part Four, consisting of seventy-seven papers is entitled "The Life and Teachings of Jesus". Included are papers dealing with such matters as the nature

and attributes of God, God's relation to the individual, the evolution of local universes, the establishment of life on Urantia, the nature of life and government on a neighboring planet, the growth and development of evolutionary religion, the revelations of epochal significance preceding the Creator Son bestowal, and the purpose and nature of Michael's sojourn here.

The total span of The URANTIA Book is far too vast and comprehensive to consider in an introductory paper such as this. One vital thread concerns not only the origin and nature of mortal, planetary beings but also their potential ascendant destiny. There is every assurance that each unique human personality has the capacity to survive physical death and to exist on successively higher awareness and reality levels, growing as an immortal soul, formed by human and divine partnership, to a fully realized spirit. Thus, Jesus' teachings of eternal life achieve new dimensions of literal truth by this expanded message.

There are many references in The URANTIA Book to the background and nature of a revelation such as this. In Paper 92, entitled "The Later Evolution of Religion", a section dealing with revelation offers this information: "Revelation is evolutionary but always progressive. Down through the ages of a world's history, the revelations of religion are ever-expanding and successively more enlightening. It is the mission of revelation to sort and censor the successive religions of evolution. But if revelation is to exalt and upstep the religions of evolution, then must such divine visitations portray teachings which are not too far removed from the thought and reactions of the age in which they are

presented. Thus must and does revelation always keep in touch with evolution. Always must the religion of revelation be limited by man's capacity of receptivity.

"But regardless of apparent connection or derivation, the religions of revelation are always characterized by a belief in some Deity of final value and in some concept of the survival of personality identity after death.

"Evolutionary religion is sentimental, not logical. It is man's reaction to belief in a hypothetical ghost-spirit world - the human belief-reflex, excited by the realization and fear of the unknown. Revelatory religion is propounded by the real spiritual world; it is the response of the superintellectual cosmos to the mortal hunger to believe in, and depend upon, the universal Deities. Evolutionary religion pictures the circuitous gropings of humanity in quest of truth; revelatory religion is that very truth." [page 1007]

In reference to the URANTIA Papers, Paper 92 also contains this fascinating statement: "The papers, of which this is one, constitute the most recent presentation of truth to the mortals of Urantia. These papers differ from all previous revelations, for they are not the work of a single universe personality but a composite presentation by many beings. But no revelation short of the attainment of the Universal Father can ever be complete. All other celestial ministrations are no more than partial, transient, and practically adapted to local conditions in time and space. While such admissions as this may possibly detract from the immediate force and authority of all revelations, the time has arrived on Urantia when it is advisable to make such frank statements,

even at the risk of weakening the future influence and authority of this, the most recent of the revelations of truth to the mortal races of Urantia." [page 1008]

I wish to include a few additional brief quotations from The URANTIA Book although selecting these is frustrating because of the vast choice of topics. I have been using quotations liberally for specificity and because it is difficult to improve upon the precise language and economy of statement characteristic of the book's prose. In choosing these readings, I am attempting to convey an idea of the scope of The URANTIA Book, the quality of the exposition, and the presentation of futuristic concepts.

Paper 41 is entitled "Physical Aspects of the Local Universe". One section includes the following: "In deciphering spectral phenomena, it should be remembered that space is not empty; that light, in traversing space, is sometimes slightly modified by the various forms of energy and matter which circulate in all organized space. Some of the lines indicating unknown matter which appear in the spectra of your sun are due to modifications of well-known elements which are floating throughout space in shattered form, the atomic casualties of the fierce encounters of the solar elemental battles. Space is pervaded by these wandering derelicts, especially sodium and calcium." [page 461]

"As your physicists have suspected, these mutilated remnants of solar calcium literally ride the light beams for varied distances, and thus their widespread dissemination throughout space is tremendously facilitated." "Of all the solar elements, calcium, notwithstanding its comparative bulk - containing as it does twenty revolving electrons-is the most successful

in escaping from the solar interior to the realms of space. This explains why there is a calcium layer, a gaseous stone surface, on the sun six thousand miles thick; and this despite the fact that nineteen lighter elements, and numerous heavier ones, are underneath." [page 462]

It is interesting to point out that the sun presence of Calcium 19 was discovered in 1964.

The next paper in sequence, Paper 42, is "Energy - Mind and Matter". A sample quotation reads: "There is innate in matter and present in universal space a form of energy not known on Urantia. When this discovery is finally made, then will physicists feel that they have solved, almost at least, the mystery of matter. And so will they have approached one step nearer the Creator; so will they have mastered one more phase of the divine technique; but in no sense will they have found God, neither will they have established the existence of matter or the operation of natural laws apart from the cosmic technique of Paradise and the motivating purpose of the Universal Father. \*

"Subsequent to even still greater progress and further discoveries, after Urantia has advanced immeasurably in comparison with present knowledge, though you should gain control of the energy revolutions of the electrical units of matter to the extent of modifying their physical manifestations - even after all such possible progress, forever will scientists be powerless to create one atom of matter or to originate one flash of energy or ever to add to matter that which we call life."  
[pages 467-468]

The evolutionary destiny of a world of time and space is a planetary age designated the "age of light and life". Paper 55 is entitled "The

Spheres of Light and Life" and Section 5, "The Acme of Material Development", offers this information. "The advanced stages of a world settled in light and life represent the acme of evolutionary material development. On these cultured worlds, gone are the idleness and friction of the earlier primitive ages. Poverty and social inequality have all but vanished, degeneracy has disappeared, and delinquency is rarely observed. Insanity has practically ceased to exist, and feeble-mindedness is a rarity.

"The economic, social, and administrative status of these worlds is of a high and perfected order. Science, art, and industry flourish, and society is a smoothly working mechanism of high material, intellectual, and cultural achievement. Industry has been largely diverted to serving the higher aims of such a superb civilization. The economic life of such a world has become ethical.

"War has become a matter of history, and there are no more armies or police forces. Government is gradually disappearing. Self-control is slowly rendering laws of human enactment obsolete. The extent of civil government and statutory regulation, in an intermediate state of advancing civilization, is in inverse proportion to the morality and spirituality of the citizenship.

"Schools are vastly improved and are devoted to the training of mind and the expansion of soul. The art centers are exquisite and the musical organizations superb. The temples of worship with their associated schools of philosophy and experiential religion are creations of beauty and grandeur. The open-air arenas of worship assembly are equally sublime in the simplicity of their artistic appointment.



"The provisions for competitive play, humor, and other phases of personal and group achievement are ample and appropriate. A special feature of the competitive activities on such a highly cultured world concerns the efforts of individuals and groups to excel in the sciences and philosophies of cosmology. Literature and oratory flourish, and language is so improved as to be symbolic of concepts as well as to be expressive of ideas. Life is refreshingly simple; man has at last coordinated a high state of mechanical development with an inspiring intellectual attainment and has overshadowed both with an exquisite spiritual achievement. The pursuit of happiness is an experience of joy and satisfaction." [pages 629-630]

The entirety of Part IV, "The Life and Teachings of Jesus", is very much in keeping with the other portions of The URANTIA Book - consistent, intelligent, and altogether fascinating. Events are described in a most straightforward fashion and annotated by a most enlightened commentary. As an interesting example, in referring to the biblically well-documented wedding at Cana, the exposition includes not only what occurred but what was in the minds of Jesus and Mary and many other participants. An excerpt reads as follows: "Near at hand stood six waterpots of stone, filled with water, holding about twenty gallons apiece. This water was intended for subsequent use in the final purification ceremonies of the wedding celebration. The commotion of the servants about these huge stone vessels, under the busy direction of his mother, attracted Jesus' attention, and going over, he observed that they were drawing wine out of them by the pitcherful. \*

"It was gradually dawning upon Jesus what had happened. Of all persons present at the marriage feast of Cana, Jesus was the most surprised. Others had expected him to work a wonder, but that was just what he had purposed not to do." [However] "in the face of the expressed wish of the Universe Creator Sovereign, there was no escaping the instantaneous appearance of wine."

"But this was in no sense a miracle. No law of nature was modified, abrogated, or even transcended. Nothing happened but the abrogation of time in association with the celestial assembly of the chemical elements requisite for the elaboration of the wine. At Cana on this occasion the agents of the Creator made wine just as they do by the ordinary natural processes except that they did it independently of time and with the intervention of superhuman agencies in the matter of the space assembly of the necessary chemical ingredients." [page 1530]

Many of Jesus' discourses to his twelve chosen apostles and to various individuals and groups, heretofore completely unreported in biblical sources, are presented in modern terms. On various occasions Jesus spoke on such matters as time and space, the nature of reality, spiritual freedom, and interpersonal relationships as well as the more familiar topics such as justice and mercy, worship, prayer, and the Kingdom of God.

As an example, The URANTIA Book relates some ideas that Jesus communicated to a friend; it states that "in substance and modern phraseology", Jesus had this to say about knowledge and truth: "Knowledge is the sphere of the material or fact-discerning mind. Truth is the domain of the spiritually endowed intellect that is conscious of knowing God.

Knowledge is demonstrable; truth is experienced. Knowledge is a possession of the mind; truth an experience of the soul, the progressing self. Knowledge is a function of the nonspiritual level; truth is a phase of the mind-spirit level of the universes. The eye of the material mind perceives a world of factual knowledge; the eye of the spiritualized intellect discerns a world of true values. These two views, synchronized and harmonized, reveal the world of reality, wherein wisdom interprets the phenomena of the universe in terms of progressive personal experience." [page 1435] In closing, I sincerely urge you to consider a careful investigation of The URANTIA Book. There are many facets to explore, consider, and return to - regardless of how you categorize or evaluate the book. Treat it not with awe, but with respect - if only for the advanced cosmology and compelling religiosity that it presents. I think you will be enlightened by the experience.

I am completely persuaded that the concepts of The URANTIA Book are on the very frontier of the highest, deepest, and best of human thought in the history of man on this planet. Furthermore, the book has a subtle growth potential in that some parts of it are consistent with the knowledge of each of the past four decades; and there is a time-blossoming of new levels inherent in the exposition. This is the nature of its cumulative futuristic aspect and it is both original and compelling. The future destiny of the planet is hopeful; but a positive future depends directly upon the quality of integration of body, mind, and spirit on the part of the mortal inhabitants, and upon the conceptual realization and implementation of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The URANTIA Book states that "We cannot judge religion by the status of its accompanying civilization; we had better estimate the real nature of a civilization by the purity and nobility of its religion." [page 1127] Also, "An ideal social order is that in which every man loves his neighbor as he loves himself." [page 1087]. This is more than a graceful and attractive ideal. It can occur; it has occurred on other worlds not unlike our own. Furthermore, on a personal level, this concept is at the very basis of life's purpose and provides the key to happiness, to survival, and to eternal life! The URANTIA Book offers some powerful and convincing arguments. It is truly a guide to the future - and beyond.

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