

The URANTIA Movement: A Perspective

by

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A Mighty Messenger temporarily attached to the Supreme Council of Nebadon and assigned to The URANTIA Book project by Gabriel of Salvington has written these now familiar words:

"There is in the mind of God a plan which embraces every creature of all his vast domains, and this plan is an eternal purpose of boundless opportunity, unlimited progress, and endless life. And the infinite treasures of such a matchless career are yours for the striving!

"The goal of eternity is ahead! The adventure of divinity attainment lies before you! The race for perfection is on! Whosoever will may enter, and certain victory will crown the efforts of every human being who will run the race of faith and trust, depending every step of the way on the leading of the indwelling Adjuster and the guidance of that good spirit of the Universe Son, which so freely has been poured out upon the flesh." (p.365)

Urantia, 606 of Satania, seared by sin, betrayed by a faithless Planetary Prince and orphaned by an erring planetary mother and father; Urantia, mortal natal sphere of Michael of Nebadon, ruler of a universe, and now a shrine of all Nebadon, is not forgotten in the planetary councils of the universe.

No, indeed, to the contrary. All the eyes of the universe are directed on this special planet as the grand drama of evolution commences further to unfold, more obviously and more critically depending on those human servers who would through their personal efforts of consecrated purpose and self-dedication augment those forces and processes which will ultimately result in the realization of a new age on Urantia.

And as we look at the task before us, we can take heart noting the words of a Universal Censor, acting by authority of the Ancients of Days resident on Uversa, who tells us:

"The mortal mind can immediately think of a thousand and one things--catastrophic physical events, appalling accidents, horrific disasters, painful illnesses and world-wide scourges--and ask whether such visitations are correlated in the unknown maneuvering of [the] probable functioning of the Supreme Being. Frankly, we do not know; we are not really sure. But we do observe that, as time passes, all these difficult and more or less mysterious situations always work out for the welfare and progress of the universes. It may be that the circumstances of existence and the inexplicable vicissitudes of living are all interwoven into a meaningful pattern of high value by the function of the Supreme and the over-control of the Trinity." (p.115)

And in commenting on one's perception of time and the speed of evolution a Life Carrier tells us:

"The individual's yardstick for time measurement is the length of his life. All creatures are thus time conditioned and, therefore, do they regard evolution as being a long-drawn-out process. To those of us whose life span is not limited by a temporal existence, evolution does not seem to be such a protracted transaction. On Paradise where time is nonexistent, these things are all present in the mind of Infinity and the acts of Eternity." (p.739)

And a Mighty Messenger in collaboration with Machiventa Melchizedek, our vicegerant Planetary Prince writes:

"The diverse levels of creation are all unified in the plans and administration of the Architects of the Master Universe. To the circumscribed minds of time-space mortals the universe may present many problems and situations which apparently portray disharmony and indicate absence of effective co-ordination; but those of us who are able to observe wider stretches of universal phenomena, and who are more experienced in this art of detecting the basic unity which underlies creative diversity and of discovering the divine oneness which overspreads all this functioning of plurality, better perceive the divine and single purpose exhibited in all these manifold manifestations of universal creative energy." (p.637)

If indeed the universe is involved in a process of growth, if it is involved in this creative technique of progressive change which we call evolution, then surely all that you and I do is a part of a larger and more comprehensive process, a process with a coordinative plan.

One could well surmise that one of the reasons we have been given The URANTIA Book, as it is and at this time, is to help us better understand and to be more efficient in helping realize the attainment of ever higher levels of planetary evolution consistent with this larger process.

One could further surmise that we as a part of the URANTIA movement, inextricably a part of this larger evolutionary process, can become more efficient and effective in this grand effort of planetary rehabilitation now under way by attempting better to discern our inner Movement's evolutionary process and how we might productively relate to the world at large in the years to come.

Many of us, I know, share a mutual desire for the betterment of the lot of our fellows--even the world--by giving them something which is today in such short supply: hope and direction. One might think of Jesus during his first visit to Jerusalem when he stopped on the brow of Mount Olivet where The URANTIA Book tells us

" ... [H]e paused and wept over the sight his eyes beheld--a spiritually impoverished people, tradition bound and living under the surveillance of the Roman legions." (p.1381)

As you and I survey the world scene, we, too, see a spiritually impoverished people, tradition bound and living under not just the surveillance but also under the threat of an array of upraised nuclear missiles which at any time could be unleashed, precipitating the destruction of present-day civilization on Urantia, throwing it back to levels of primitive times--if not altogether destroying it--and all this on Michael's natal sphere, the final bestowal world of the Prince of Peace.

And for those of us who would like to see a better world, it is all too easy because of the immensity and pluralism of the planetary problems, and perhaps because of our rather short human perspective on time-space relationships and the larger process involved, to cast about embracing simple and perhaps emotionally pleasing panaceas for the attempted resolution of these planetary problems. But, should we not be circumspect in our choice or our development of a plan or plans of action to deal with these problems, we most certainly run the risk of committing in the words of The URANTIA Book,

" ... [T]he supreme philosophical blunder by over simplifying cosmic evolutionary (experiential) reality, thus leading to the distortion of facts, to the perversion of truth, and to misconception of destinies." (p.215)

In view of this danger of over-simplification, it would behoove us to be mindful of the antecedents of our difficult planetary situation as our brotherhood craft enters upon the open seas of planetary, even universe, challenge.

We face an accumulated inertia of countless centuries which have suffered from the repercussions of rebellion and default, and until the appearance of The URANTIA Book, we have been largely handicapped by a lack of wise and authoritative direction in so many fields of human endeavor.

The difficulty in focalizing and redirecting the energies found in the accumulated momentum of these centuries of planetary confusion can perhaps be likened to the difficulty of redirecting the course of a great ocean liner, which under full steam must suddenly make a hard right turn. It requires both time and distance to accomplish such a maneuver and likewise just as our present planetary situation arose over centuries, so it will take centuries to accomplish its redirection and ultimate salvation. And as we survey the world scene at this moment of planetary crisis, we can take confidence in the fact that there is in process already the development of a powerful force for good on the planet. And we like the poet referred to in the philosophic analogs of Morontia Mota can "discern poetry in the commonplace prose of routine existence." (p.557)

For the last thirty years or so, two organizations have been carrying on purposefully and relatively quietly in establishing the material underpinnings for the realization and support of a broader planetary upreach for a better state of world affairs. These two organizations, URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood, early accepted their role of quiet preparation and quickly settled down to their task of proceeding practically and patiently in taking the necessary steps of establishing the material, legal and organizational pre-requisites for the success of the URANTIA Revelation. Their task was not an easy one, nor was it always pleasant, but notwithstanding that there were sometimes sustained and vocal invitations into less promising byways, both organizations were true to their trust, and because of the quiet and selfless dedication of so many of their members over so many years, the URANTIA Revelation has achieved a sure and certain foothold on this planet. The efforts of these silent, steadfast servers gives proof to that here rephrased Churchillian statement: "Never have so few, done so much, for so many."

In looking back over the approximate last three decades, one can see the accomplishment of a number of important goals. Let us look at ten of them here, though there are more:

1. The copyright in and to The URANTIA Book was and is established and confirmed both at home and abroad.

2. The registered marks which helped give URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood and its constituent societies their own unique identity which will avoid their confusion with other groups and organizations, and which will help identify them down through the years, have been established and successfully defended at home and abroad.
3. The URANTIA Brotherhood is well established and is running more and more effectively with increasingly diverse and capable leadership. Its committee system is maturing into a means for more and more effective co-ordinated group function with widespread participation.
4. A French translation of The URANTIA Book is again available under the auspices of URANTIA Foundation, and with the co-operation of URANTIA Brotherhood.
5. A plan for the realization of a Spanish and other translations of The URANTIA Book has been both architected and implemented with the full co-operation of URANTIA Brotherhood.
6. A Finnish translation of The URANTIA Book has been and is still actively in progress and is nearing a point where we can with certainty anticipate its finalization and publication.
7. A special perpetual printing fund for the English edition of The URANTIA Book has been established.

8. A new book distribution and pricing policy has been carefully considered, structured, adopted and implemented by URANTIA Brotherhood with the approval and support of URANTIA Foundation.
9. There are now approximately 126,000 copies of the English edition of The URANTIA Book available in the world, and in addition there are approximately 10,000 copies of the French edition of The URANTIA Book likewise in circulation.
10. Based on accumulated evolutionary experience, a definitive copyright policy has been developed and promulgated which will help others more freely and properly use, insofar as the legal requirements are concerned, material from The URANTIA Book.

Certainly the job of these two organizations is not finished, but these ten accomplishments are essential and exceedingly important to the future stages of the development of the presentation of the URANTIA Revelation to this planet.

As a result of the efforts of URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood, more than ever before is the world assured that future generations of mankind will have and will be able to enjoy the URANTIA Revelation as it was originally given to us. And, too, more than ever before is the revelation in a position to go on to more generally benefit mankind, even to realize a new age of religion on our planet.

Today, we close the chapter on the organizational phase of the URANTIA Movement, and as we do, let us be thankful for, and appreciative of, the sincere, dedicated and largely unsung efforts of so many, many personalities, both human and superhuman, who have worked and are working for the success of the URANTIA Revelation. And in doing so, let us rededicate ourselves to the task at hand.

In trying to characterize the events of the last three decades, perhaps we can best capture their significance and the significance of the road which now lies before us by recalling the words of Winston Churchill who said, " This is certainly not the end, nor is it the beginning of the end, but perhaps we can say it is the end of the beginning." And so here today, in the environs of the "City of Angels" we can formally recognize the closing of the first stage, the organizational stage, in that evolutionary process in which the URANTIA Movement is now engaged.

And now as we look ahead to the next phase of the evolution of the URANTIA Movement, we can take direction from, and sense the power of, the teachings of The URANTIA Book as they relate to the upliftment of the entire planet.

I invite your attention to the following passages from
The URANTIA Book:

"Insects are born fully educated and equipped for life-- indeed, a very narrow and purely instinctive existence. The human baby is born without an education; therefore, man possesses the power, by controlling the educational training of the younger generation, greatly to modify the evolutionary course of civilization.

"The greatest twentieth-century influences contributing to the furtherance of civilization and the advancement of culture are the marked increase in world travel and the unparalleled improvements in methods of communication. But the improvement in education has not kept pace with the expanding social structure; neither has the modern appreciation of ethics developed in correspondence with growth along more purely intellectual and scientific lines. And modern civilization is at a standstill in spiritual development and the safeguarding of the home institution." (p.909)

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"The ideals of one generation carve out the channels of destiny for immediate posterity. The quality of the social torchbearers will determine whether civilization goes forward or backward. The homes, churches and schools of one generation predetermine the character trend of the succeeding generation. The moral and spiritual momentum of a race or a nation largely determines the cultural velocity of that civilization." (p.909)

And the Midwayer Commission comments:

"By this process of gradually changing man's will and thus affecting human decisions, Michael and his associates are likewise gradually but certainly changing the entire course of human evolution, social and otherwise." (p. 1863)

And a Melchizedek writes,

"Public opinion, common opinion, has always delayed society; nevertheless it is valuable, for, while retarding social evolution, it does preserve civilization. Education of public opinion is the only safe and true method of accelerating civilization; ...Public opinion, the mores, is the basic and elemental energy in social evolution...." (p.802)

One could well suggest that with the planet suffering ideological confusion, philosophic chaos, racial strife, political disorientation, economic derangement and spiritual stagnation that the time is indeed ripe for the communication of the ideals and the practical suggestions of The URANTIA Book to the world at large. But how best should this be done?

If the first phase of the URANTIA Movement was largely organizational in nature, then the next phase of the presentation of the Fifth Major Epochal Revelation to mankind consists in a studied, co-ordinated and concerted effort to infuse into every level of modern civilization the directionalizing, promising and hopeful teachings of The URANTIA Book. In this way we may take advantage of the groundwork so carefully laid over the last thirty years. But it would seem best that this be done over time consistent with the immensity of the gathered momentum of the planet's problems and the necessity for time to prepare our larger plan of planetary service and to train the necessary corps of leaders and teachers. Just as Adam and Eve were to have assembled one million of their offspring before undertaking their task of planetary biological upliftment,

so we must muster, train and prepare our reserves before we take on a more public or overt ministry. Too, we can remember that much time passed between the time Jesus first heard an assigned messenger from Salvington in Jerusalem at the age of thirteen urging him to be about his Father's business, and the time when Jesus actually undertook the commencement of his public career. Too, Jesus on his trip to Rome helped prepare the way for the reception of his teachings by judicious selection of, and discussions with, certain leaders and teachers, and, of course, Jesus did not begin his public ministry until he had selected and trained his own Apostles. So let it be with us.

And in looking at our modern dilemma, let us take note of this instruction from The URANTIA Book:

"Society is not a divine institution; it is a phenomenon of progressive evolution; and advancing civilization is always delayed when its leaders are slow in making those changes in the social organization which are essential to keeping pace with the scientific developments of the age. For all that, things must not be despised just because they are old, neither should an idea be unconditionally embraced just because it is novel and new.

"Man should be unafraid to experiment with the mechanism of society. But always should these adventures in cultural adjustment be controlled by those who are fully conversant with the history of social evolution; and always should

these innovators be counseled by the wisdom of those who have had practical experience in the domains of contemplated social or economic experiment. No great social or economic change should be attempted suddenly.

Time is essential to all types of human adjustment-- physical, social or economic. Only moral and spiritual adjustments can be made on the spur of the moment, and even these require the passing of time for the full outworking of their material and social repercussions. The ideals of the race are the chief support and assurance during the critical times when civilization is in transit from one level to another." (p.911)

In view of the foregoing, we may well surmise that this second phase of endeavor of the URANTIA Movement is to be a long-term project and definitely will be of a much longer duration than the organizational phase just closed. But it does promise much more intriguing and exciting possibilities for creative, even valorous participation by all of us.

What I am suggesting today is nothing less than the all-out preparation and planning for a considered and sustained effort to mobilize and prepare teachers and teaching aids for the effective teaching of The URANTIA Book. It will, just as did the first phase, require both dedication and sophistication--and patience.

Too, we must judiciously use the most up-to-date equipment, methods and techniques, taking full advantage of the advances in modern science and technology as they affect communication. Nevertheless, the essence of this effort is quite simple: the study and dissemination of the teachings of The URANTIA Book. And all this can be and is to be done consistent with the injunction of spreading The URANTIA Book on a low key, person-to-person basis in a quiet non-public way.

Our strategy is this: First and foremost and continuing into the indefinite future will be the concentrated effort more effectively to teach the teachings of The URANTIA Book within the movement. Already the Education Committee of URANTIA Brotherhood has published "A Statement of the Current Thinking of the Education Committee of URANTIA Brotherhood 1983," which reflects this approach. Other efforts appear mobilizing on the horizon and already we have a number of precursors to more replete and far-reaching effective teaching.

It is essential that all of us, each of us, better understands The URANTIA Book, the better to be able to share its teachings. We need to develop more workable, practical and efficient means of teaching The URANTIA Book to those who are interested in knowing its teaching. There are already interesting possibilities apparent to a number of people. Too, a number of trained, capable teachers are ready, willing and able to play their part in the forthcoming battle of truth against error.

Now secondly, and perhaps of even a longer term and of a more challenging nature, is the task of developing means, practices and techniques for injecting saving ideas from The URANTIA Book into all phases and levels of human endeavor. This is perhaps to a large extent inextricably connected with the growth of the Movement, but we can in any event begin now and indeed some have already done so and have been doing this effectively over a number of years. And, too, there are already developing groups which have commenced to position themselves to act as advantageously as possible along these lines.

Remember:

"By this process of gradually changing man's will and thus affecting human decisions, Michael and his associates are likewise gradually but certainly changing the entire course of human evolution, social and otherwise." (p. 1863)

If we get impatient with the foregoing approach, we can take heart that a great deal has already been accomplished, and furthermore we are already actually seeing the beginnings of more effective teaching and dissemination of the teachings of The URANTIA Book.

Now, some (as in the past--and it is not a new idea) have suggested that now is the time for the public proclamation of the availability of The URANTIA Book. The problem with this approach is that it in itself offers no direct continuity with past preparations, nor does it promise any plan for the future. As a simplistic activity, it fails to take account of our planetary situation and makes those errors of:

"...oversimplifying cosmic evolutionary (experiential) reality, thus leading to the distortion of facts, to the perversion of truth, and to misconception of destinies." (p.215)

Furthermore, can anyone seriously argue that our task is any less difficult or challenging than that which confronted Adam and Eve on their mission to our planet? Certainly our task is not any less difficult. But if this is the case, then should we not be all the more alert to the experiential wisdom already so painfully earned from the Adamic experience on this planet?

Solonia, the "Voice in the Garden," the angel who was then present at the time of the default relates:

"Probably no material sons of Nebadon were ever faced with such a difficult and seemingly hopeless task as confronted Adam and Eve in the sorry plight of Urantia. But they would have sometime met with success had they been more farseeing and patient. Both of them, especially Eve, were altogether too impatient; they were not willing to settle down to the long, long endurance test. They wanted to see some immediate results, and they did, but the results thus secured proved most disastrous both to themselves and to their world." (pp.839-40)

Solonia continues:

"In estimating the results of the Adamic mission on your world, justice demands the recognition of the condition of the planet. Adam was confronted with a well-nigh hopeless task when, with his beautiful mate, he was transported from Jerusem to this dark and confused planet. But had they been guided by the counsel of the Melchizedeks and their associates, and had they been more patient, they would have eventually met with success. But Eve listened to the insidious propaganda of personal liberty and planetary freedom of action." (p.846)

* * *

"Never, in all your ascent to Paradise, will you gain anything by impatiently attempting to circumvent the established and divine plan by short cuts, personal inventions, or other devices for improving on the way of perfection, to perfection, and for eternal perfection.

"All in all, there probably never was a more disheartening miscarriage of wisdom on any planet in all Nebadon." (p.846)

No, now is not the time for the public proclamation of the availability of The URANTIA Book. No, this is not our gospel; our gospel is the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man to be spread throughout the world in the most effective ways possible, augmenting this effort as we may with the teachings of The URANTIA Book.

And our way fulfills the past and carries great promise for the future for it readily recognizes the evolutionary need for thorough training and preparation over time prior to engaging in such a larger plan as that of a sustained effort for the upliftment and benign directionalization of the entire course of human planetary evolution. We can and will settle down to the long, long endurance test, but we shall do so with verve, enthusiasm and a sense of humor.

Jesus said:

"The heathen are not without excuse when they rage at us. Because their outlook is small and narrow, they are able to concentrate their energies enthusiastically. Their goal is near and more or less visible; wherefore do they strive with valiant and effective execution. You who have professed entrance into the kingdom of heaven are altogether too vacillating and indefinite in your teaching conduct. The heathen strike directly for their objectives; you are guilty of too much chronic yearning. If you desire to enter the kingdom, why do you not take it by spiritual assault even as the heathen take a city they lay seige to. You are hardly worthy of the kingdom when your service consists so largely in an attitude of regretting the past, whining over the present, and vainly hoping for the future. Why do the heathen rage? Because they know not the truth. Why do you languish in futile yearning?

Because you obey not the truth. Cease your useless yearning and go forth bravely doing that which concerns the establishment of the kingdom." (pp.1725 & 26)

And while it is not my intent to suggest that any particular group or person is heathen, this passage does behoove us to be not dismayed by others' enthusiastic concentration of their energies on more concrete and more visible goals and who strike directly for their objective. Rather, should we all the more dedicate our efforts to the more diffuse and broad goal of planetary upliftment going forth bravely, doing that which we know is both practical and effective in establishing through the process of progressive evolution the kingdom of heaven in the minds and hearts of all mankind.

In working with this revelation, we are working with many superhuman personalities and spiritual agencies. Too, this is their world, not ours; we are only temporary residents here. Their desire is to see the spiritual quickening of all mankind with consequent actions consistent with the teachings of The URANTIA Book which will ultimately culminate in the realization of an entire planet's settlement in the ages of Light and Life--a true, living organic brotherhood of mankind.

The angels can only work effectively with those of us who will work with them. If we can accept this broader picture of things including the time frame of the angels, if we can put aside our personal programs in favor of sincere co-operation in their more all-encompassing coordinative effort, we, as both individuals and as

a group, will be in a better position to productively effect the epochal work of presenting a new revelation to mankind.

Today, as we close the first chapter in the presentation of new truth to the world, may each of us look forward to the future with confidence because we have a plan, a plan that is consistent with evolutionary reality and the requirements of the modern world.

And may the Father's will be done in your life as it shall be done in the life of the world.

* * *

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our Brotherhood ship was launched without worldly fanfare in a calm and sheltered bay nearly three decades ago. Its design was special and enduring. It was given special form and composition by its Constitution. Its portholes were designed to house cannon, not to belch smoke and flame, but to fire salvos of light and truth to give new life. Our flag, though hanging somewhat limply at that launching was a blue Concentric-Circles Symbol on a white background.

To begin with, our crew was somewhat inexperienced, their charts somewhat incomplete. But theirs was a voyage of discovery and what they lacked in factual definition, they made up for with intelligent enthusiasm. Today, our ship has moved out on to the high seas of adventure and challenge. Its course has been set through some already

stormy seas and we know the buffeting and shoving of the waves, we know the fury of the winds; but our ship has not put in to the tempting sheltered bays that it has seen.

Our crew has served us well. Now our crew's intelligent enthusiasm is being reinforced with actual experience. Also, new crew members are coming aboard strengthening our ability to better handle our vessel.

Presently, we have chosen momentarily to head our ship into the wind, sails luffing, relying briefly on the gathered momentum of the past twenty-eight years to give us forward headway as we check our charts.

And now, yes, we can read our charts more clearly. Yes, we better see the course we should follow. The order is given. The shout to man our stations is heard. The crew goes into the rigging. The sails are set, and now all on board begin to feel the ship to move, the sails begin to fill, our craft leans into the wind.

Throughout the ship we feel the shudder of our vessel as the power of the wind is transmuted into an irresistible forward driving force.

As we begin to cut through the waves at ever increasing speed, our signal flags are spread in bold and colorful array proclaiming the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. And above these signal flags but below our Concentric-Circles flag, now unfolding is our battle flag signifying the now coming battle of truth against error.

And at the top the highest mast is the Concentric-Circles flag, our flag, no longer limp and listless but full, free and flowing for all the world to see and know of the coming of a new age to Urantia.

The storm front has past. Our ship moves forward with increasing vigor and power, but we sail not into a sunset but into the dawning of a new era, into the sunlight of a new age.

The Brotherhood ship is on course. It is following its charts.

We crew members can work with confidence in carrying out our shipboard duties for our ship is moving forward to that unknown, but sure, rendezvous with destiny.

* * *

As valiant Soldiers of the Circles may we wholeheartedly enlist the solid ranks of those mortals who shall go forth in this coming battle of truth against error under the unfaltering leadership of the mighty Seraphim of Progress.