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PURSUIT OF WISDOM

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All quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from The URANTIA Book c 1955 and are used by permission. Interpretations and opinions herein are those of the authors.

The evolution of statehood entails progress from level to level, as follows: ... 12. The world-wide vogue of the pursuit of wisdom - the exaltation of philosophy. The evolution of a world religion, which will presage the entrance of the planet upon the earlier phases of settlement in light and life. pp 606-7.

MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

In 1970 the Glomar Challenger sailed for the Mediterranean Sea. Two scientists, Bill Ryan and Ken Shoemaker, were looking for evidence of the early history of the Mediterranean. At a site 100 miles east of the Strait of Gibraltar they drilled for a core sample.

15 million years ago the Strait of Gibraltar closed. Around Urantia it was a time of mountain building and volcanic activity. The Mediterranean was connected to the Atlantic Ocean for a while by a channel across France so that the mountain peaks of that region stood above the water as islands in a sea. Later the Mediterranean connected with the Indian Ocean, but by 10 million years ago when the Suez was elevated, the Mediterranean was cut off from the oceans of the world and became for a time an inland salt sea. p. 697.

As the scientists attempted to obtain a sample of the sea floor their drill bit became stuck. Upon retrieval they discovered the last section of their pipe filled with a strange type of gravel composed of only four components: volcanic bedrock, limestone, gypsum, and tiny fossils. Their find amazed the team.

Ten million years ago the Mediterranean Sea covered much of northern Africa. p. 698. For a short time all the land was again joined except for Australis. Five million years ago the land connection between Africa and South America submerged and the Western Hemisphere became isolated much as it is today. This time is usually called the Pliocene.

The scientists obtained one thousand feet of core sample. The rock record revealed a time of rising alpine mountains and continental collisions. Other sites around the Mediterranean were sampled. Each time they found the bedrock covered with limestone, then gypsum containing shells of very small sea creatures.

In their search for an answer to what this meant the scientists examined gravel in other places of the world. For example, they found gravels in Death Valley, California, to be composed of a great variety of components, and they concluded these were washed down from surrounding areas. Gravels do not form at the bottom of a sea, however, and the Mediterranean gravels were different. They had never been washed down. They had occurred in place. The tiny animals were adults that had survived in an extreme environment, a stressed community. The gypsum could have only formed through evaporation. The limestone could have formed from dried

up oozes. The scientists had found evidence of an evaporative tidal flat with volcanic activity nearby. They found a record of a cataclysmic event near the Strait of Gibraltar.

On p. 721 we are told that the Mediterranean Sea was extended in the Black Sea area about 550,000 years ago. Then one-half million years ago the Mediterranean Sea retreated consequent upon the elevation of Arabia and the Sangik peoples of this time were able to reach Africa, p. 726. The superior Sangiks migrated to northern more temperate climes, but the orange, green, and indigo races gravitated to Africa over this newly elevated land bridge separating the westward retreating Mediterranean from the Indian Ocean, p. 728.

The scientists found that the rivers and rains that flow and fall into the Mediterranean Sea do not bring in enough water to match the evaporation from the hot sun. Their core samples showed areas of soils on the slopes, tidal flats along the margins, and in the middle Mediterranean, the last drill site in the center of the abysmal plain, the deepest part of the sea, they hit rock salt! They concluded that the very middle of the Mediterranean was at one time completely dry. Moreover, they found over 1000 feet of salt deposits in places. Since it takes the evaporation of about 50 feet of salt water to form one foot of solid salt, they knew that even if the entire Mediterranean dried up there would not be enough water for the amount of salt they had found.

The URANTIA Book tells us on page 890 that about 34,000 years ago the isthmus of Gibraltar, protecting the western Mediterranean, broke during an earthquake, quickly raising this inland lake to the level of the Atlantic Ocean. Then the Sicilian land bridge submerged, and the Mediterranean became one sea connected to the Atlantic Ocean. This great cataclysm caused the highest loss of life by flood in all of the world's history.

To account for their theory that the Mediterranean had once been an inland sea, the scientists speculated on how the Mediterranean had been closed. They concluded that the Strait of Gibraltar had opened and closed throughout history. At once cutting off the Mediterranean from its western source and then suddenly, cataclysmally, breaking and exposing the relatively dry basin to the onrush of the open Atlantic cascading over a falls perhaps a kilometer in height. The onslaught of water was so forceful it broke the sound barrier as it fell and washed away three million years of the rock record.

Less than 34,000 years ago, in connection with the violent activity of the surrounding volcanos and the submergence of the Sicilian land bridge to Africa, the eastern floor of the Mediterranean slowly sank, carrying down beneath the waters the entire peninsula of the first Garden of Eden. At the same time the coast of the eastern Mediterranean was greatly elevated, p. 826-7. Then on page 889-90 we are told that during the earlier days of the violet race the Mediterranean trough was protected by the Gibraltar isthmus and the Sicilian land bridge, and early maritime commerce was established on these inland lakes. The Nile delta was slowly rising along with the upthrust of the Saharan area and the shifting of the water-laden winds from the west to the north turned these once great pasture areas into barren desert.

There was additional evidence to support the scientists' theories. When the Aswan Dam was being built in the late 1960's, a Soviet geologist named Chumakov was working on the foundations. He found a deep notch right through the Nubian granite of the Nile valley. Although he did not understand the mechanism at the time, he concluded that the Nile had at one time formed a great waterfall in the area. He deduced that the only way this could have happened was if the sea level of the Mediterranean had dropped hundreds of meters. After communicating with

Ryan and Shoo, they came to an understanding of the dynamics of the Mediterranean: strategic areas of land had risen and sank and the water had advanced and retreated over geologic time. It was the only way to explain their findings. They published their papers together.

The URANTIA Book details millions of years of geologic history for us in the section on the history of Urantia. Included in this detail is a record of the Mediterranean basin before and after it was inhabited by man. We are instructed of its connection to the open oceans and of its periodic isolation. We know the land was elevated then subsequently submerged and deluged as the water receded and then returned. It is a wonderful history, full of long eventless periods punctuated by cataclysmic occurrences and highlighted by gradual changes. This history is important to us and this importance is only now being understood.

Twenty years after their original findings Bill Ryan and Ken Shoo are completely convinced that the Mediterranean has not always been as it is today. Although there are still many skeptics, they know this region has shown historic periods of deep open sea, inland salt lakes, shallow tidal basins, and barren salt and sand deserts. They understand that the sea level has risen and fallen along with corresponding parts of the continents and land bridges. They believe these geologic changes have happened many times over the past and that they might even happen again.

What these scientists do not yet know is that they have unwittingly helped to confirm a documented history of this region that was written even before the tools to complete their deep sea survey had been developed. And although we do not need their findings, their theories, and their speculations to maintain our belief of the fifth epocal revelation, it is work by people such as these that increases our understanding and our awe of the great knowledge and wisdom of the presenters of The URANTIA Book.



COSMIC BACKGROUND RADIATION

The URANTIA Book contains much scientific information. Since its publication some of this data has been discovered and confirmed and some has not. It gives me an indescribable feeling when I read something in the book that has since been shown to exist by way of the scientific method. Even when the short term interpretation of some data does not align with the explanation given, the book proves over and over again that its authors are privy to a range of information that would revolutionize science as we know it today.

On p. 473 The URANTIA Book states, "Gravity presence and action is what prevents the appearance of the theoretical absolute zero, for interstellar space does not have the temperature of absolute zero." This small statement might go unnoticed to someone not familiar with cosmology or astrophysics. But to someone trained in these fields, this information, coming as it did in 1934 and published in 1955, is revelational.

Before 1940 most scientists assumed that interstellar space was without heat. It was believed that space existed at a temperature of absolute zero. Absolute zero is the temperature of an object whose molecular motion is at a minimum. Molecular action does not cease at this coldest possible temperature (-273 degrees Celsius, -459 degrees Fahrenheit, or 0 degrees Kelvin), but kinetic energy, the motion of matter, can go no lower as we know it. It was also widely believed that space was empty, although complex molecules have subsequently been discovered in deep space. The URANTIA Book states on p. 473 that the emptiest space known in Nebadon, our local universe, would yield about one hundred ultimatons, the equivalent of one electron, in each cubic inch.

The scientific world began to discover traces of infrared radiation, heat, in unexpected areas. In 1940 while working at Mt. Wilson, Dunham and Adams discovered puzzling interstellar absorption lines. After analysis of their data, it was suggested that the molecules observed were being kept at a temperature of 3 degrees Kelvin. This theory seemed too simple to be taken seriously at the time. The data lay dormant for 25 years as the technology of astrophysical instrumentation progressed.

In 1946 Gamow and associates, from John Hopkins, suggested a vestigial cosmic radiation bath might still persist if the universe had had an explosive origin. Then in 1965 Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson of Bell Telephone started testing a new radio antenna. They found an excess noise corresponding to radiation at a temperature of about 3 degrees impinging on Earth from all directions. In 1978 Penzias and Wilson were awarded a share of the Nobel prize in physics for their discovery of this microwave background radiation.

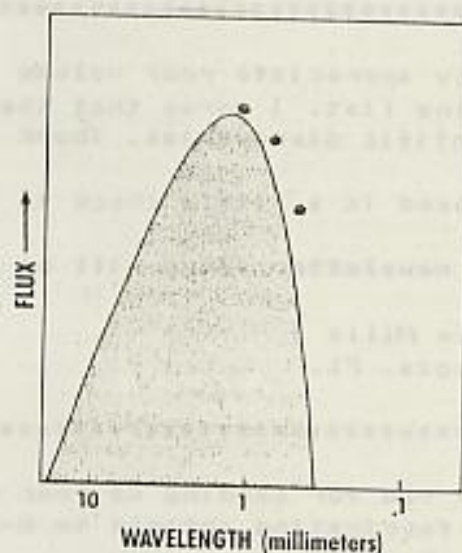
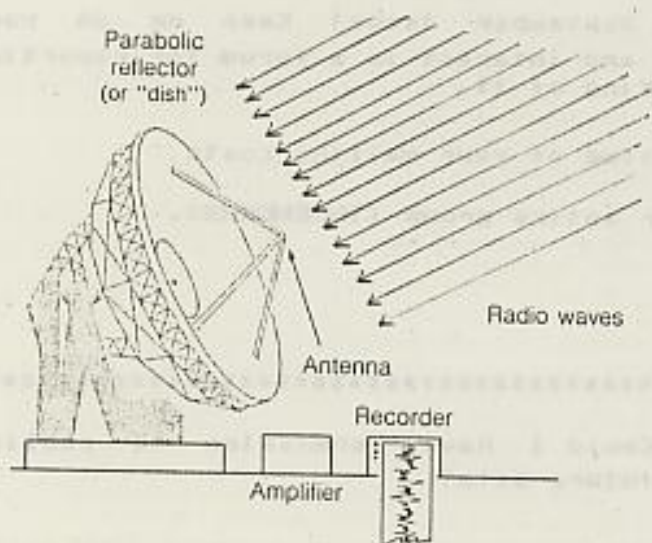
To explain this mysterious background radiation it was postulated that this evenly distributed low-grade space temperature was a remnant of the Big Bang. It has since been used as the main evidence to support this theory. It is even used to trace the cosmos back to the very first milliseconds of the universe's existence! Of course, the URANTIA Book seems to indicate that there was no Big Bang, and the very latest measurements of the cosmic background radiation do not fit the theory either.

It seems that the scientists has predicted the measurements of the cosmic background radiation to form the roughly bell-shaped curve of a blackbody radiator when graphed. Deep space should act like a blackbody, a perfect absorber or emitter of radiation. However, before 1988 only part of the spectrum of this background radiation had been measured. All of the measurements had been

made on one side of the curve as the atmosphere blocks out shorter wavelengths and the Earth itself radiates profusely and swamps the subtle cosmic signal. So the other side of the curve had been conjecture for 25 years. It was just assumed that this side also fit the blackbody curve.

Last year two scientists finally succeeded in measuring points on this unknown side. Their findings are causing trouble for many of their colleagues. They do not fit the blackbody curve. They are about 10 percent higher than expected. So new conjecture has arisen to account for this irregularity. It will take cosmologists some time and more work will need to be done to confirm the recent findings. The next few years should prove interesting as new data from this area is collected and analyzed.

It is more than coincidence that the latest scientific evidence does not support popular scientific theories like the Big Bang. For now, it is sufficient to say that the latest evidence does support the information given in The URANTIA Book. The Big Bang theory will be investigated more fully in a future edition of The Pursuit of Wisdom.



Three new data points on the microwave background don't fit a blackbody curve.

Subscription to The Pursuit of Wisdom, a newsletter relating the information given in The URANTIA Book to recent scientific data, is free. If you wish to receive this, please send your name and address to the publisher below. If you are already receiving the newsletter and wish to discontinue the service please inform us. Address correction is requested.

Contributing articles are welcome but will be published at the discretion of the publisher. Reader comments are welcome.

LETTERS

Congratulations on your Vol. 1 No. 1 Pursuit of Wisdom on the topic of the Milky Way and the Seventh Superuniverse. Your work is well thought out, creative and informed. I like the idea of someone Keeping a cumulative cross-reference between URANTIA Book cosmology/science and that of terrestrial origin.

Troy R. Bishop
Silver Spring, Md.

Thank you for sending me a copy of the premier issue of Pursuit of Wisdom. I am pleased to see other folks are writing about cosmology...

I was pleased to see that you came to the same conclusion about Orvonton that I did in one of my "The Messenger" articles.

Dick Bain
St. Petersburg, Fl.

Really appreciate your volume 1, number 1, September issue! Keep me on your mailing list. I agree that there is a need and interest in a forum for reporting scientific discoveries. Thank you for thinking of it.

Enclosed is a little check to help defray some of your mailing costs.

Your newsletter forum will be shared by our entire group (INCENDERS).

Patije Mills
Sarasota, Fl.

Thank you for sending us your newsletter. Could I have permission to publish your fascinating article in G-0-6 at some future date?

Madeline Noordzy
Victoria, Australia

We understand the time and effort you put into your new publication and appreciate your contribution toward bringing our planet to Light and Life.

George Sammis
Brotherhood of Man Library, Mason City, Iowa

I really enjoyed the first issue of the P.O.W. I also have been contemplating some of the astronomical aspects of the U. Book, but not to the extent you have. The distance of Orvonton has bothered me too. I have a little different perspective from the one you presented, If our sun takes 230 million years to orbit the Milky Way center, and if its velocity is 220 Km/sec as most books

report, and if the orbit is essentially circular, then the radius of that circle is 26,850 light years - a long way from 200,000. However, if one were to travel to the galaxy center, one would not travel along a radii, but rather follow some curved path. The shortest route would be an ellipse whose properties would be dictated by the mass of the center, the relative velocity between the center and our planet, and the escape velocity from this solar system... So, I don't think a path normal to the rotational plane is very practical even for seraphim. That only leaves a path along some curve in the rotational plane which takes maximum advantage of all the other masses along the route, while at the same time avoiding any collisions... If so, a least energy path would be along one of the spiral arms.

...For the distance along the Orion arm, beginning at a radius of 31K, I compute 210,000 light years. Considering the crudeness of my calculation, that's in agreement with the Book. Whether that is what the writers had in mind I have no idea, but it is an interesting result. The main point, however, is that the distances are not necessarily along radii. I suppose seraphim could travel along a light beam, but there's not a clue that I can find in the book as to their path.

While I have no basis to disagree on your speculation of the composition of Orvonton, I would like to point out that your million light-year circle is misleading. The galaxies you depict don't lie in a plane, but are in a very complicated three dimensional relation...

Travis Binion
Normandy, Th.

In answer to Mr. Binion's letter I would like to suggest:

On p. 170 The URANTIA Book states that when viewing a certain nebula, "...pause to consider that the light you behold left those distant suns almost one million years ago."

On p. 459 when discussing variable stars the Book states, "By this technique it is possible to measure stellar distances most precisely up to more than one million light-years."

"Energy, whether as light or in other forms, in its flight through space moves straight forward." p. 461

These and other references throughout the Book suggest that stellar distances are measured in light-years, and that light does indeed travel in straight lines. Your analysis seems to indicate that we should measure distances by the route of probable travel. While I can follow your reasoning somewhat, I find it inconsistent with the information given.

As to the path seraphim or other entities would take, I do not know. However, their speeds are often listed. On p. 260-261 we are told that nonenseraphimed beings' limit of velocity is 186,280 miles per second (speed of light). Midway creatures attain double velocity - 372,560 miles per second - and seraphim can attain 558,849 miles per second, triple the speed of light. Then they explain that Solitary Messengers can travel at speeds up to and probably exceeding 841,621,642,000 miles per second. That is 4,513,046 times the speed of light!

On p. 222 a Divine Councilor explains that Trinity-origin beings can travel

independent of seraphim. They possess the power of moving freely and quickly in the universe of universes. And while they cannot accelerate to the almost unbelievable velocity of the Solitary Messengers, they can reach any point in a superuniverse, from its headquarters, in less than a year of Urantia time. "It required 109 days of your time for me to journey from Uversa to Urantia," stated the Divine Counselor!

Since these beings are not concerned with the passage of time as we know it, and since the distance from Uversa, the capital of Orvonton, to Jerusem, the capital of Satania, is listed at 200,000 light years, that puts their linear velocity in the range of 670,000 times the speed of light. Clearly we cannot understand traveling paths or velocities in this range.

As to the million light-year circle being misleading, I do not agree. Any time you try to convey a three dimensional pattern in two dimensions there can be misinterpretation. Our own solar system when viewed from different perspectives can sometimes lead one to false conclusions. Pluto, for example, does not lie in the plane of the other planets. It also swings inside the orbit of Neptune during some periods, and extends its range beyond it at others. When viewed from above, however, as many texts diagram our system, it is obvious that all the planets and even comets, etc., belong to one group. While the relative motions and the distinct position in space of the participating members of the Milky Way core of the Local Group have not been completely deciphered, I believe all the galaxies I listed are members of one organizational unit, Orvonton, just as the planets, asteroids, comets, and other heavenly solar system bodies discovered so far, are all members of Monmatia.

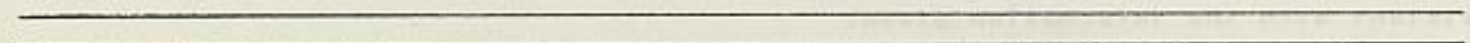
In any case my article has fulfilled its purpose of promoting thought and study of The URANTIA Book. I agree that future investigation in this field will prove most interesting.

F.W.

I found your latest newsletter a bit depressing. Of course I had heard much of this before, but it is overwhelming when all the bad news is put together in one newsletter. You ought to send a copy to all the folks up on capitol hill...

The cosmology by T. Faulkner and R. Yarnell is pretty impressive. Unfortunately, the small print didn't reproduce well. It would make a great study guide if it could be had in larger size.

Dick Bain
St. Petersburg, Fl.



Frank Wright
3123 Culpepper Rd.
Knoxville, Tn. 37917