

Grace Evangelical And Reformed Church

307 North Plymouth Street

Culver, Indiana

MEREDITH J. SPRUNCER, Ph.D., Minister

December 12, 1956

Miss Marian Rowley
Urantia Brotherhood
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago 14, Illinois

Dear Miss Rowley:

Thank you for your letter. I appreciated receiving a copy of the letter which you have mimeographed. I have only one regret: its immaturity! Although a copy of the Urantia Book was given to me this summer, I didn't get around to reading it until September. Being rather thoroughly prepared for it, I almost immediately recognized its significance. Early in October we had a Pastor's Retreat. I wanted to introduce several of my close friends to the Urantia Book at that time, so I wrote up the introduction to clear my own mind and help getting them to understand. This was sort of an emergency measure.

Being one who likes to check facts from first hand sources, I immediately sought an interview with William Sadler, Jr. and sent him a copy of the introduction to get facts corrected. Here I discovered that while the facts which I had gotten from Mr. Harrah were relatively correct, Mr. Sadler suggested the wisdom of mentioning only that which the book itself revealed. Accordingly I revised the introduction.

Since that time I have read the first and second sections of the book - and still have a large part of the third section to read - and my advice concerning the sections to read first has changed. I have some rather definite ideas here but am not going to pass them on to others until I have finished the book and study it as a whole. So, you see that section of the introduction I would change.

You folks who have been studying the Urantia Papers for years may not appreciate the huge amount of material to be covered. Had it not been for rather thorough preparation which I have had, it would take much longer. In a couple of months I will "crystalize" what seems to me a minimum approach for the average Christian. The main weakness of my suggestion in the introduction is that some orthodox people would be so disturbed by the unfamiliar section of the first part of Part IV that they will not read the latter part.

I was simply carried away by my own enthusiasm and wanted to give what I had "found" to these close friends and could only recommend what I had read. As a matter of fact some of the first section which I had scanned looked a bit "obtuse". In fact I started reading the Urantia Book by carefully going over the Foreword. It left me a little groggy and probably for relief I turned to the Life and Teachings of Jesus and became so interested and finally so impressed that I did scarcely anything but read until it was finished.

We are looking forward to meeting you people of the Urantia Foundation.

Sincerely,

Meredith J. Sprunger

Meredith J. Sprunger

MAY I INTRODUCE YOU TO A MOST UNUSUAL BOOK:

Every advance in knowledge is a disturbing and painful experience for man. This is true of both quantitative knowledge (science) and qualitative knowledge (religion). Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake for contending the earth was not in the center of the universe. Louis Pasteur was denounced by the learned men of his day when he contended that diseases were caused by germs. When William Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood most of the physicians of his day who were over thirty-five continued the rest of their lives to believe there was no such thing. Shortly before Wilbur and Orville Wright flew their first plane at Kitty Hawk, N. C. a distinguished scientist wrote a convincing article proving that it was scientifically impossible to fly a vehicle heavier than air. The list could go on and on.

Scientists, however, are not the only people afflicted with this type of myopic vision. Growth in religious insight has been plagued with even greater resistance and suffering. The prophets have been stoned; the saviours are crucified - by religious men and women who believe they are doing the will of God.

The basic error responsible for our historic resistance to truth, both scientific and religious, is mankind's tendency to accept second hand, once removed, sources of reality - usually authoritarianism and tradition. The Bible does not contain the word of God because our theological professors, our pastors or our parents say it does. It is not Eternal Truth because the prophets have seen visions or worked miracles. The ultimate authority of truth is its intrinsic, self-validating nature. There is in every man a spark of the Divine which bears witness to the Truth. The only way one can know the Bible contains the word of God is through this inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...and will declare to you the things that are to come." John 16:13

With this background I should like to introduce you to a book which, at first impulse, you will no doubt reject. After this first impulse passes, I urge you - with all the sincerity and urgency at my command - to read and study this book carefully and critically. Remember that you never need fear Truth and that falsehood cannot stand careful scrutiny.

This book is entitled: The Urantia Book. It was published by the Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago 14, Illinois in 1955 and contains 2095 pages. Examining its contents you will discover that it claims to be written by numerous celestial beings as a special revelation to man living on this world, Urantia. It asserts that it contains the first major Divine Revelation since the coming of Christ to our planet. "These papers differ from all previous revelations, for they are not the work of a single universe personality (such as Melchizedek of Salem or Jesus of Nazareth) but a composite presentation of 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 of 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." p. 1008

One would expect that any authentic revelation would be continuous with and not contrary to previous authentic revelations. Although the New Testament presents a loftier view than the Old Testament, it is continuous with it. You will discover this same parallel between the New Testament and the Urantia Book. Many of the things Bible students have wondered about and yearned to know are clarified in the Urantia Book.

For this reason I strongly suggest that you begin reading the Urantia Book at Part IV, page 1323 - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - and that you read this entire section before turning to other sections of the Urantia Book. Most laymen and some ministers will need help and time to grasp and follow much of the rest of the book. But by this time you will have understood its immense significance and will be willing to undergo this rigorous study - or you will have thrown the book aside as impossible and preposterous.

Although the worth of the book does not stand or fall with the human personalities connected with it, you have a right to know these facts. Around 1934 Dr. William S. Sadler, one of the most reputable psychiatrists in the country, received a call from a woman near his home in Chicago who was alarmed about her husband who mumbled in his sleep. In this condition she was unable to wake him. Dr. Sadler investigated and discovered the man was saying some rather unusual things. As this man was a practical business man having no interest in spiritual or psychical matters (when he awoke in the morning he knew of nothing that he had said), Dr. Sadler started a critical study of the case. Having just written a book entitled The Mind at Mischief in which he exposed mediums and psychic communication as quackery, he determined to find the explanation of this man's behavior. A stenographer accompanied him to take down this man's unconscious mumblings. Eventually word came that papers would appear the next day in a certain bureau drawer. These were found - yellow sheets handwritten in pencil. Periodically more papers were promised and they always came. During this period Dr. Sadler, being a critical and exacting scientist, made every conceivable investigation which might lead to an explanation of the appearance or origin of the papers. Finally he was forced to the conclusion that there was no scientific explanation. The contents of the papers were of a quality absolutely impossible for this prosaic business man to produce. Slowly he began to realize the immense significance of these papers. Quietly Dr. Sadler introduced them to business and professional friends. Eventually they organized the Urantia Foundation as a non-profit organization.

They were instructed to make a permanent record of these papers. After the papers had been copied by a typist they were placed in a desk drawer and although the building was locked, the next morning the papers would be gone. Once, as a test, Dr. Sadler concealed a five dollar bill among one batch of papers. The next morning the papers were gone and the five dollar bill lay in the bottom of the drawer. Eventually the papers were finished. But they were instructed not to publish the book while the war was in progress. Finally when the Korean war was over they were instructed to go ahead with the printing.

As you read the Urantia Book try to do so with an open mind and listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It stands or falls on its own inner validity or lack of it. If you only browse through the book, you will almost certainly reject it. Read Part IV through before even attempting to make a judgment. You will discover that it does not advocate a new religion. It cautions repeatedly concerning the dangers of fanaticism. If your religious convictions are mature and if you have grown in reasonable spiritual insight, inspired by the teachings of Christ, you will find that reading and accepting the teachings of the Urantia Book will not change any of your fundamental religious convictions - and it will confirm many things which, through the guidance of the Spirit, you have surmised to be true. Although the Urantia Book may not change your fundamental convictions, it will add tremendously to your knowledge of God.

Significant Books

Objective-Scientific Approaches Toward Reality

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| Human Destiny - Leconte de Lisle | New World of the Mind - J. B. Rhine |
| The Crisis of Our Age - P. A. Sorokin | The Doctor and the Soul - Victor E. Frankl |
| On Being Human - Ashley Montagu | Pain, Sex and Time - Gerald Heard |
| Is the Kingdom of God Realism - E. S. Jones | A Study of History - Arnold Toynbee |
| Religion and the New Psychology - A. J. Smith | Science is the Sacred Cow - Anthony Standen |

First Hand Knowledge of God

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| In Tune With the Infinite - R. W. Tine | A Preface to Prayer - Gerald Heard |
| The Path of the Saint - Anonymous (Harper) | Introduction to the Devout Life - St. Francis de Sales |
| An Autobiography of Prayer - Albert Day | Manifest Victory - J. R. Moseley |
| Intelligent Prayer - Lewis MacLachlan | Perfect Everything - J. R. Moseley |
| The Spiritual Life - Evelyn Underhill | This Is the Life - Starr Daily |
| A Testament of Devotion - Thomas Kelly | The Perennial Philosophy - Aldous Huxley |
| Letters by a Modern Mystic - F. C. Lombard | The Choice is Always Ours - D. El Phillips |
| Channels of Spiritual Power - F. C. Lombard | |
| Cosmic Consciousness - Richard Bucke | |

Religion and Health

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| New Concepts of Healing - A. G. Ikin | Christ Healing - E. Howard Cobb |
| The Healing Light - Agnes Sanford | Healing Through the Power of Christ - J. Wilson |
| Everyman's Search - Rebecca Deard | Stretching Forth Thine Hand to Heal - R.A.R. Spread |
| Everyman's Goal - Rebecca Beard | Recovery - Starr Daily |
| Fourth Spiritual Seminar on Healing | Be Thou Made Whole - Glenn Clark |
| Wainwright House, Rye, New York | Sharing Magazine - 2243 Front St., San Diego, Calif. |
| New Horizons of Healing - Wm. Wood | Manual of Christian Healing - Order of St. Luke |
| | 2243 Front Street, San Diego 1, California |

Supernormal Experience

- There is a River - Thomas Sugrue
Adventures in the Supernormal - Eileen Garrett
The Reach of the Mind - J. B. Rhine
Many Mansions - Gina Cerminara
Emanuel Swedenborg, Scientist and Mystic - S. Tokevig
Awareness - Eileen Garrett
Beyond Doubt - Mary Lebeau

Evidence of the Spiritual World

- You Will Survive After Death - Sherwood Eddy
Immortality - A. J. Smith
On the Edge of the Etheric - Arthur Findlay
The Unfolding Universe - Arthur Findlay
The Rock of Truth - Arthur Findlay
The Gateway of Understanding - C. A. Wickland
The Unobstructed Universe - S. E. White
On the Threshold of the Unseen - W. F. Barrett
From the Seventh Plane - Winfred Willard
Seeing the Invisible - Winfred Willard
Lighted Passage - H. S. Vincent

New Revelation?

- The Urantia Book - Urantia Foundation
533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.