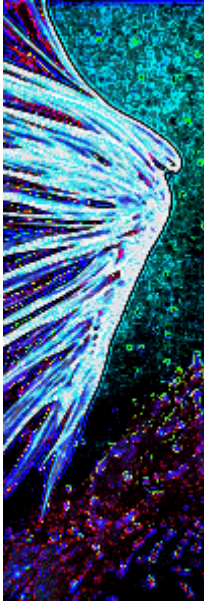


Seraphic Velocity

Riddle of the Missing Light Years

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The *URANTIA Book* description of seraphic velocity has led a number of readers to what could seem like an inconsistency in a book which many of them have embraced chiefly because of its amazing consistency. The problem is that the distances traversed by seraphim, as described in *The URANTIA Book*, do not seem to consume the time that they should, given the velocity of seraphic travel that is also described in *The URANTIA Book*. *The URANTIA Book* teaches that seraphim can travel at triple velocity: three times the speed of light, or 558,000 miles per second, averaging about 550,000 miles per second (260B,D;433C). This speed, in and of itself, presents no problem, even in view of the theory of relativity, which teaches that the speed of light (186,280 miles per second) is the limit of speed for any object. *The URANTIA Book* also teaches that the speed of light is a limiting speed--for most non enseraphimed beings (260D). As nonmaterial beings, seraphim might be expected to be exempt from the material speed limit of relativity.

Expected transit times

The seraphim seem to perform activities throughout the confines of the local universe, and even beyond, with an ability that transcends their apparent velocity of transit. The setting for most of these activities is the local universe, composed of one hundred constellations, each constellation composed of one hundred local systems. (The star cloud that is our local universe was organized from components of more than one nebula, which have been adjusted over a period of time to travel as a unit through space) (455D). Our local system, Satania, contains 619 inhabited worlds, in over 500 different physical systems (359D), and over *two thousand brilliant suns*, of which our sun is average (458A).

Sun is another word for *star*. According to astronomy, the star nearest our sun is Proxima Centauri, located about four light years away. To traverse this distance--to get from here to the nearest star--would take a seraphim one-third of four, or over *one year*. Drawing a line around any 200-star group that includes our sun, in an attempt roughly to outline our system, is sure to set off a distance that would require scores or hundreds of years for a seraphim to traverse at triple velocity. It would seem reasonable that it should take this same amount of time for seraphim to journey between our planet, Urantia, and our system headquarters, Jerusem (and its circling, attendant mansion-world satellites). The possibility might be raised that regardless of how big the system is, Urantia and Jerusem could be close neighbors inside it, situated only a relatively short journey apart. But *The URANTIA Book* teaches that our solar system is the second farthest in our local system from Jerusem (466D) and that Urantia is on the outskirts of our system, Satania (466D), while Jerusem is very close to the astronomical center of Satania, which is occupied by an enormous dark island of space (457A) (not a black hole). A seraphic journey between Urantia and Jerusem should occupy scores--perhaps hundreds--of years at seraphic triple velocity. And seraphic travel between Jerusem and its constellation capital, Edentia--headquarters world for one hundred systems--should take hundreds or thousands of years.

Third-day question

A question asked by some *URANTIA Book* readers is: how can the *URANTIA Book* teaching that mortals are sometimes resurrected on Jerusem's Mansion World Number 1 *on the third day following physical death*, after being transported there by guardian seraphim, be reconciled with the fact that thirty years--or maybe three hundred years--would seem the minimum reasonable time for such a journey?

The suggestion is sometimes offered that the exact term is *third period*, not *third day* (1232A; 1232B); and *period* can denote any amount of time. This makes a little sense to me, although it leaves entirely too many vaguely unexplained activities going on in the economy of the realm for me to feel easy with it. The argument fell completely apart for me a few years back when Dan Massey kindly sent me a copy of a letter he had written to a *URANTIA Book* reader in France who had inquired into the apparent contradiction involving seraphic velocity and been referred to Dan. In the letter, Dan identified a direct *URANTIA Book* referral to resurrection on the mansion world on the *third day* following physical death; and since that time, I have seen other such references (569C; 538A; 853C).

With travel to Jerusem identified as definitely occupying no more than three *days*, the next question often raised is: What is a *day*? Is it a *Urantia day*? A *Jerusem day*? Some *other day*? Unless it's a *Paradise-Havona day*, which is about a thousand years (humor intended: this type of day is not applicable to the superuniverses of time), it couldn't make much difference to the question, for the days in question don't differ much--not nearly enough to explain the discrepancies being examined. Some information can be gleaned from *The URANTIA Book* about specific instances of seraphic transport.

Specific instances

Thirty-seven thousand years ago, Adam and Eve were delivered by seraphic transport to Urantia from Jerusem, in dematerialized form (a combustion body of flesh and blood cannot be transported by seraphim). Ten days later, when their rematerialization into dual human form was completed, they regained consciousness simultaneously (828A). Soon after their awakening on Urantia, at high noon on their *first Urantia day* as conscious, functioning beings, they were installed as the custodians and rulers of Urantia (829B-830A). On their seventh day on Urantia, just before noon, *exactly six days after their installation on Urantia*, a seraphic messenger brought to Urantia the Jerusem acknowledgement of this installation. Jerusem could not have used the system circuits to receive news of the planetary installation, for the system circuits were in a severed status due to the rebellion (830C); communication within the system and between the system headquarters and constellation headquarters had to be by messenger (830C; 606D; 607D). Under some conditions, Solitary Messengers, who can travel at speeds of over 800 billion miles per second (261:2), are available at the system level (261:2; 607D). Even if a Solitary Messenger bore the news of the Urantia installation to Jerusem, the seraphim traveling from Jerusem could have had *six Urantia--earth! days* at most to reach Urantia. Since, from above, this journey should have required scores or hundreds of years for a seraphim to complete, this is a definite instance of an apparent conflict between *URANTIA Book* descriptions of distance, seraphic velocity, and time of travel.

The Melchizedek receivers returned from Jerusem *seventy days after the default of Adam and Eve* (844A); since the Melchizedek receivers travel by seraphic transport (833B), this is another case of too rapid seraphic travel. The Adamic couple left the garden shortly after the Melchizedeks arrived

and were met on the third day out (no significance to this figure) by the arrival of seraphic transports who had come from Jerusem for certain of the Adamic offspring (844C). This seraphic journey from Jerusem, after the default of Adam and Eve, took a matter of days--not scores or hundreds of years--to complete (since the seraphim couldn't have begun the journey until the default, the reason for their trip)--a third instance of mysteriously enhanced seraphic travel.

Before the arrival of Adam and Eve on Urantia, in the times of the Planetary Prince, when the rebellion occurred, 200,000 years ago, Van and the Loyalists awaited confirmation of their actions in defying the rebels, which came *seven years later* with the arrival of a Most High of Edentia *with the emergency Melchizedeks (756A-757C) (who travel by seraphic transport--see above)*. This delay of seven years--not seven score or seven hundred--was primarily for the purpose of allowing each personality on Urantia affected by the rebellion to make up his or her mind on his or her position (757C). Note that the Most High was a Most High of Edentia, who, if he came to Urantia from Edentia, should have traveled for probably thousands of years, as stated above. (So few literal facts are available about the Vorondadek order of sonship, which also includes the Most Highs, that it is of interest to note that this order of sonship--traveling with the enseraphimed Melchizedeks above--also relies on seraphim for transport.)

Consistent contradiction

Events of similar significance occur elsewhere in *The URANTIA Book*, such as a Most High coming to the planet during Michael's bestowal here as Jesus of Nazareth. A stunning example of the *consistency* of the apparent contradiction in *The URANTIA Book* between the familiar formulas relating speed, distance, and time is the *URANTIA Book* narration that Solitary Messengers, who travel at incredible speeds (at least 841,621,642,000 miles per second) (261A), sometimes travel as temporary ambassadors from established local universes to newly inhabited local universes until regular ambassadors can arrive (260B). The reason given for this is that regular ambassadors, who travel by means of seraphic transport, could be required to travel for long periods of time to reach such far-distant local universes (260B). This ambassadorial outreach can span an entire superuniverse, not just the containing minor sector (260A). Since our superuniverse, Orvonton, is half-a-million light years across (250,000 light year radius) (359D-360A), it should require one-half million years for *light* to travel between two local universes at opposite ends of the superuniverse; the time required for *enseraphimed ambassadors* to make this same journey should be one-third of that, or *one hundred sixty-six thousand years--one-sixth of a million years!* In keeping with its consistent contradiction, *The URANTIA Book* refers to this maximum time as *hundreds of years* (260B).

The writers of *The URANTIA Book*, with its amazing consistency and their incredible intelligence, are undoubtedly aware of this apparent contradiction. They have coped in other areas with (then) impending advances in human knowledge by using wording which seemed innocuous before the new discovery, yet later was seen to contain previously unnoticed ambiguities allowing either the pre- or post-discovery interpretation. (The revelators are forbidden to anticipate the human discoveries of a thousand years) (1109B).

Something to learn

It would seem to me that there is a factor yet to be learned, in light of which this "brazen" contradiction will be most acceptable. Until then, the consistent contradiction is a part of the *URANTIA Book* landscape, as the Easter Island Statues are a part of the earth's archaeological landscape: conspicuous, challenging--and not explained. (The Easter Island Statues--or rather the

early people of this island and its use as an Andite religious and administrative center--do happen to be explained in *The URANTIA Book* (837C).

The idea of a new factor first came to me from, again, Dan Massey, who, during a personal conversation, responded to one of my observations/questions about the problem of seraphic velocity with the view that perhaps things change in ways other than currently envisioned by science during travel involving speeds very near to--or in this case several times greater than--the speed of light. Perhaps time, or distance, change in ways other than the commonly envisioned time shift and length contraction of relativity. Einstein's Theory of Relativity is perhaps too often viewed as somehow "correct" and exempt from the fallibilities of humankind, never needing correction, further development, or interpretation.

The writers of *The URANTIA Book* have possibly left us a hint of the problem--and what is to come--with a little smile. In a discussion on the vulnerability of materialism, near the end of the book, they address the theory of relativity, humankind's most impressive monument to its greatness, as--dabblings with the faintly glimpsed findings of relativity (2078D).

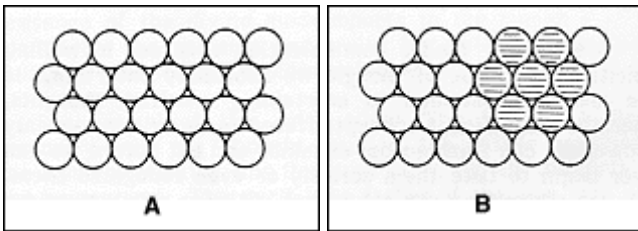
The consistent contradiction doesn't seem to fit the category of statements presented *in accordance with* existing scientific knowledge which will later be proven wrong as scientific knowledge advances (1109C). It *flatly defies* present scientific knowledge--just as did other statements in *The URANTIA Book* with which science has later come to concur. It will be interesting to see what new findings will develop in science to show once again that *The URANTIA Book* was right.

Starring the Circle

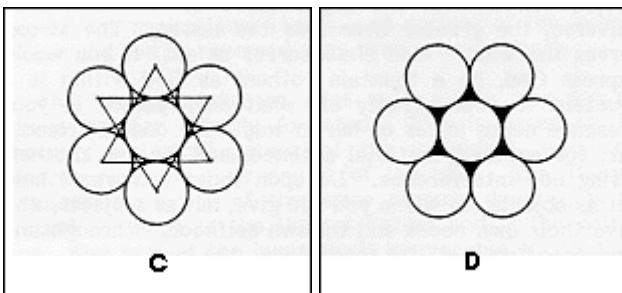
(C) 1982 Troy R. Bishop

What has a handful of pennies got to do with the Star of David, ancient symbol of Judaism? And what connection is there between the Star of David and atoms--or between the Star of David and a snowflake? To find out, lay twenty or thirty pennies flat on a table and arrange them as close together as you can. The result should be several alternating rows of pennies, each row slipped from alignment with those adjoining it by half the width of a penny (Figure A).

This arrangement is known in solid state physics, which concerns itself with the way atoms arrange themselves together in solid matter, as *planar close packing*. Select one of the pennies and mentally place a mark on it. If it is not on an edge, it will be touched by exactly six neighboring pennies. Mentally mark these six pennies as well. You will now have the pattern of seven marked pennies shown in Figure B. This pattern is repeated throughout the entire arrangement, except where the edges interfere, and is known in solid state physics as a *unit cell*, meaning that the arrangement is built of repetitions of this basic pattern.



Figures C and D show how the unit cell of planar close packing contains the figure known as the Star of David, a six-pointed star formed from two interpenetrating triangles. The *Star of David*, a figure based on a six-sided polygon of straight lines, is inherent in a figure based on seven circles.



The URANTIA Book teaches that the number *seven* appears in the traditions of religions and mystical teachings throughout the world because this represents the maximum possible number of manifestations of the three Paradise Deities. There are just seven possible combinations of any three items, alone or in combination, and they are:

1. First item alone.
2. Second item Alone.
3. Third item alone.
4. First item and second item together.

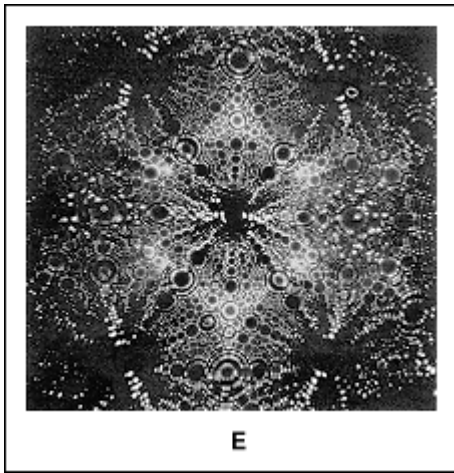
5. First item and third item together.
6. Second item and third item together.
7. First, second, and third item together.

The URANTIA Book also teaches that *seven* is echoed in the material world, indicating the ultimate high origin even of material reality. As an example, the Periodic Table of the Elements, a chart in which scientists arrange the physical elements in order of ascending atomic number, shows that certain physical properties tend to recur in every seventh element.

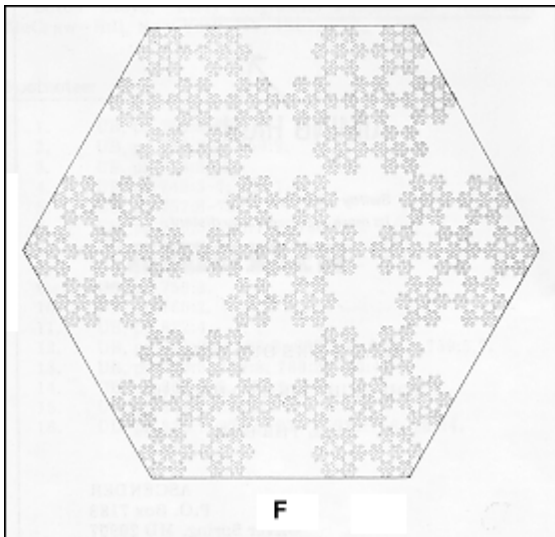
Could there be more symbolism behind the Star of David than most of us know today? Machiventa Melchizedek sojourned and taught among the predecessors of the Jewish people and could have taught them things of this nature. The idea of a symbol which can signify the nature of the three Paradise Deities and the Paradise Trinity; which can portray the Seven Absolutes of Infinity as well as the triodities of actuality and potentiality; which combines unity, duality, and triunity relationships (as well as sevenfold and twelvefold relationships, which we shall see later have special significance); which indicates the structure of matter and the relationship of matter to the Paradise Sources; and *which is actually carried in the heart of basic matter itself* is tremendously appealing.

We are told in *The URANTIA Book* that the number *seven* is particularly associated with the ministry of *life*, as is also the number *twelve*. One way to arrive at the number *twelve* from the number *seven* is to observe that the unit cell of planar close packing contains *exactly twelve pairs* formed from the seven circles of the unit cell; or, in the language of solid state physics, there are exactly twelve pair-bonds formed. *Seven* and *twelve* are mentioned together in the teaching that there are just seven architectural forms of life in the universe and that these architectural forms of life are characterized by the number of inheritance carriers they incorporate, these inheritance carriers occurring in ascending multiples of twelve; that is, one architectural form of life has twelve inheritance carriers, the second has twenty-four, the third forty-eight, and so on to the seventh, which has seven hundred sixty-eight. (Note that throughout *The URANTIA Book*, the word *chromosome* is not used when referring to the number of human inheritance carriers. Since the time of the writing of *The URANTIA Book*, science has changed its mind about the number of chromosomes each individual human possesses; however, the statements of *The URANTIA Book* on the matter, error free then, are still error free).

The URANTIA Book refers in several places to *the space content of matter*. It also talks of pursuing matter to a point where matter disappears to the senses but what remains is real to the mind. Using an instrument called a *field ion microscope*, it is possible to observe matter as a collection of individual atoms, each atom a dot of light and the space between a dark void. In Figure E, a bit of tungsten examined through a field ion microscope has disappeared to the senses and all that remains is a pattern; because of human understanding of the significance of this pattern, though, its identity as tungsten remains real to human mind. Each dot, which represents an individual atom, appears in at least two different intersecting circles--as if it needs the two separate centers of force, represented by the centers of two different circles, to balance it and keep it from being pulled into any one. Hold the illustration quite a distance away and a large Star of David will be seen in it, the picture revealing itself as seven huge circles arranged as a unit cell of planar close packing.



Think in a reverse direction for a moment about matter being built up out of unit cells. Visualize that a theoretical tiny, flat circle is really composed of seven smaller circles arranged as a unit cell of planar close packing. Each of these small circles in the unit cell in turn is composed of a smaller unit cell of tinier circles and so on, until the smallest circles of all appear only as dots. What sort of a figure would result from trying to depict such a relationship? Figure F is the result of such an attempt. Sixteen thousand eight hundred and seven dots and some precise positioning were required to develop this figure, which displays unusual symmetry and balance, six-pointed stars, and the general appearance of a snowflake, one of nature's beautiful associations of free particles.



* * *

URANTIA Book Reading References:

UB, pp 479:8-480:1; 184:1-184:2; 1016:6; 1017:1; 1146:1; 1151:last; 1157:3; 397:4; 1228:6

Urantia Namesake

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Most persons who read *The URANTIA Book* have probably wondered at some time or other about the meaning of the word *URANTIA*. The question of the meaning of *Urantia* can be addressed in terms of Earth languages, which came after it, or the celestial language of which it is a part. The latter, if feasible, seems the most meaningful approach. One starting point in this direction is to look for patterns in celestial place-naming conventions in *The URANTIA Book*. At various universe levels, it is generally--but perhaps not always--the *lower* that names the *higher*; the higher does not generally reveal itself by name to the lower. This pattern begins with Paradise Deity, the First Source and Center (22:4). The lower often derive their *dwelling-place name* from the name of the *assistant ruler* at some level above them. There may be many reasons for this; for example, it is the *assistant*, not the *superior*, who deals with the level below.

Such a convention could explain the name of our system, *Satania* (182:5-6). Previous to the rebellion, Lucifer ruled as the system sovereign, assisted by his lieutenant, *Satan* (601:3-5; 602:4). Satan was the individual actually to contact with the individual worlds of the system (602:1; 604:4; 609:6; 611:3). To the system worlds, Satan was the immediate representative of system administration, until he and Lucifer were dethroned.

Place-naming for the second in command was also observed when the Planetary Prince, Caligastia, named the planetary headquarters city *Dalamatia*, in honor of his lieutenant, *Daligastia* (724:3; 743:4). In a less pronounced but very important example, the sphere of the order of Melchizedeks is named *Melchizedek*, which is the name of the person who is a co-source of the order and, under Gabriel, Michael, and the Mother Spirit, their leader.

In an exciting and spectacular example of the celestial convention of place-naming for the second in command, our entire superuniverse, *Orvonton*, comprising one-seventh of the organized and inhabited creation of space and time, is named after the Infinite Spirit's seventh Paradise satellite (198:5), headquarters of Supreme Executive Number Seven--the *assistant* through whom Master Spirit Number Seven, ruler of Orvonton, administers his domain. As the sphere *Melchizedek* is named after the high being Melchizedek, the seventh executive world of the Infinite Spirit might be named after the high executive who administers the superuniverse from it. His name thus might be *Orvonton*; or it might be *Orvon*, the *ton* suffix constituting a *place designation*, as in *Washington* or *Salvington*. (Though these English suffixes might not be part of the higher languages of creation, they are used in the rendering of many higher words presented in *The URANTIA Book*.) One might tend to discount the terminal *ton* as just such a suffix, but such an ending appears in the name of at least one being at the Paradise level: *Majeston*, where it seems that the terminal syllable is actually part of the root name. It is true in this case, however, that the *t* in the ending is a part of the stem--not a suffix. In the case of the sphere *Melchizedek*, there is no suffix added to the name of the individual for whom the sphere is named. Being free to choose either *Orvon* or *Orvonton* as the name for the Seventh Supreme Executive, this discussion will choose *Orvon*, though the other choice would not change the essence of what follows.

Urantia and its historical derivatives are ancient and also ultimately foreign. In ancient *Ur* words--for example, *Urartu* and *Urmia*--*Ur* is pronounced *oor*. Similarly, the initial--and perhaps the terminal--

in *Urantia* would be pronounced with an *ah* sound, as in the final *a* in *garage*. Thus, before modernization and anglicization--or rather Americanization, *Urantia* might properly be pronounced *oor - ahn - tee - ah*. If the initial *o* in *Orvonton* is pronounced with the same ancient and pre-English sound of *oo*, the comparative pronunciation of the two words is:

Oor - ahn - tia --- *Urantia*

Oor - vahn - ton --- *Orvonton*

One might suspect that the *v* in *Orvonton* has become silent over time to produce *Urantia*; but both *Orvonton* and *Urantia* are *revealed celestial words*, probably not subject--or *as* subject--in their celestial habitat to such evolution. The dropping of the *v* from *Orvonton* to *Urantia* might indicate a subtle difference in meaning: for example, a *diminutive form*. The suffixes in the two names can be considered to be equivalent, since they are *place* suffixes.

Oron as a celestially derived variant of *Orvon* is suggested in an intriguing and potentially spectacular example. On the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea, where the sunken Hecataeus Ridge, suspected as being the Edenic Peninsula, joins the coast, a river flows inland in a direct line that would include the ridge, were it not abruptly detoured by a sudden upthrust of mountains parallel to the coast line. (Upthrust in connection with the sinking of Eden? See 826:6) This river, flowing where the great river of Eden might have flowed, is called the *Orontes*. Pronouncing the word aloud reveals its kinship to *Urantia*.

The possible metamorphosis of *Oor - vahn* to *Oor - ahn* can reveal great meaning in the name *Urantia* and in time-honored derivatives of *Ur* or *Oor*, as in *Urtu*, the civilization arising at Lake Van after the arrival there of the loyal staff of the rebellious Planetary Prince. This possibility of *Urantia*--least of *Satania*--as a namesake of the administrator of the entire superuniverse of *Orvonton* may be a linguistic instance, in a celestial setting, of the *least* truly being *greatest*.

Ezra's Followers

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The URANTIA Book teaches about Ezra, an apparently leading disciple of John the Baptist who refused to accept Jesus. With John's other disciples, Ezra heard John proclaim Jesus "the Son of God, the deliverer of the world!" when Jesus entered the Jordan camp after his baptism and subsequent forty days of momentous decision making in the hills (1505-1506). The next day, Ezra led a group of John's disciples from the camp amid great conflict, maintaining that Jesus could not be as their teacher said, else he should have come "in power and Glory" as the prophet Daniel had foretold. Hurrying south, Ezra and his followers continued to baptize in John's name but steadfastly rejected Jesus. According to *The URANTIA Book*, a remnant of this cult survives in Mesopotamia today (1526).

The Mandaean

In the marshes at the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers lives a sect of people who baptize in the name of John the Baptist but do not accept Jesus of Nazareth. These are the *Mandaeans*, or *Subba*, a people numbering only a few thousand in 1963. Boatbuilders and workers in gold and silver, the Mandaeans recount in legend that their origin was in Palestine. Their teacher, they say, was John the Baptist. Baptism in flowing water--which they call *yardna*, perhaps derived from the name *Jordan*--is their chief sacrament (1).



MANDAEAN PRIEST performing baptism: total immersion plus the giving of the water to drink

The earlier title of the Mandaeans was *Nazarene*. Could this be a rendering of the word *Nazarite*? Several of the disciples of John at the Jordan camp might actually have been Nazarites. As a youth, John had taken the Nazarite life vows (1496:6-7). Before beginning his public ministry, he had been a member of the Nazarite colony at Engedi, convincing its members that the end of an age was at hand (1499:3). John's chief disciple was Abner, acknowledged head of the Engedi Nazarites (1497:7; 1624:3-5; 1771:6; 1817:1). John had difficulty fully fraternizing with many of the Engedi brotherhood (1497:7)--which could account for the ease with which Ezra and his followers brought themselves to disagree with their teacher on this most important point. The Mandaeans are not alone in claiming a teacher to the exclusion of his teachings. *The URANTIA Book* teaches that Christianity has become a religion *about* Jesus rather than the religion *of* Jesus (1543:2; 2051:4-5; 2066:6; 2091:11; 2075:2).

And *URANTIA Book* readers, though alerted, will certainly face similar tendencies.

* * *

Footnotes

1. **J. B. Segal**, "The Sabian Mysteries," *Vanished Civilizations of the Ancient World*, edited by Edward Bacon, Thames and Hudson, London, 1963 [\(ok\)](#)



URARTU

LOST KINGDOM OF VAN

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With the dawning of the twentieth century, a long forgotten culture has been rediscovered in the Anatolian Highlands of Asia Minor. This ancient civilization, *Urartu* (pronounced oo-rar'-too), which was centered about Lake Van, flourished from the ninth to the sixth century B.C., extending from Lake Urmia in the east to North Syria in the west. During its three hundred years of existence, the Urartian Empire was a formidable power. Later, it was vanquished and disappeared from the memory of man.

Distinguished predecessors revealed

The land occupied by the Urartians has played a prominent part in the agelong universe ministry to and on our planet reported in *The URANTIA Book*. The pendulum of world destiny turned in that direction long before the recall of modern man.

It was two hundred thousand years ago when Van, an ascendant (rematerialized) volunteer to Urantia, listened to Caligastia, his superior and the celestial ruler of our planet, announce a plan to reject the Paradise rule of the Father and the Creator Son (1). Van, who had labored in Caligastia's headquarters city of Dalamatia for three hundred thousand years under the plan for world advancement, denounced the rebels vigorously. With Amadon, his modified Andonite associate, he gathered a small band of loyalists and withdrew to a nearby unwalled settlement. Loyal seraphim, cherubim, midway creatures, life carriers, ascendant corporeal volunteers, modified Andonites, and others each turned from the authority of the Planetary Prince and the tasks of three hundred thousand years to choose the truth of the primacy of the Universal Father over the easy habits of obedience (2).

Though darkness and death reigned outside the settlement, loyal midway sentries were ever vigilant. Van and Amadon had the priceless tree of life, appropriated by loyal cherbim, seraphim, and midway creatures at the outbreak of the rebellion (3). By partaking of the fruit and leaves of this tree, within which circulated superhuman energies, these two beings, whose bodies contained the organic

complement of the system life circuits, were able to live on indefinitely (4). Those of their loyal material and semimaterial comrades whose bodies were similarly constituted were also thus able to lead an immortal existence. Their disloyal counterparts in Dalamatia, however, finding themselves shut off from this life ministry, were faced with certain mortal death and dissolution (5).

The outbreak of rebellion had thrown the interplanetary circuits silent by quarantine (6). For seven anxious years, the loyalists waited to learn of their status with the universe authorities. At last a messenger came, with news vindicating their actions in defying the Prince. Turning finally and forever from the former city of promise as it lay (possibly) at the (then) mouth of the Persian Gulf, the group traveled across the expanse of the Mesopotamian plain to the abrupt wall of the bordering highlands. Leaving behind the dust of Mesopotamia, they entered the highlands--and a rendezvous with destiny (7).

Soon after this relocation, all of Van and Amadon's loyal material and semimaterial associates of immortality status were translated from Urantia to system headquarters (8), and Van was invested as titular head of all superhuman personalities on Urantia (9). From these secluded heights, within one thousand years, Van and Amadon established three hundred and fifty settlements of people loyal to the plan of mortal progression and universe cooperation (10). This network stretched from Lake Van eastward to the region of the southern Caspian Sea (11) and on to the foothills of the Kopet Daugh, in Turkestan, which we are led in *The URANTIA Book* to believe was the eastern terminus of the Vannic network and also the primary headquarters of Van and Amadon (12).



ABOVE LEFT: THE MESOPOTAMIAN WALL. The Zagros Mountain Range, running southwest, overlooking the Mesopotamian plains.



ABOVE RIGHT: THE GREAT CITADEL ROCK AT VAN. First stronghold and capital of the Urartian state, overlooking Lake Van. Carved in the rock are cuneiform inscriptions of the Urartian kings, some of whom were buried here in rock-cut tombs. Foreground: ruins of an old Turkish city.

For one hundred and fifty thousand years, Van and Amadon led the highland descendants of their original human followers in laboring for the uplift of the world (13). For untold generations, legends grew about these two immortal ministers of God who continued to live and work among men. Gradually, Van and Amadon came to be viewed as divine or near-divine personages and were woven into the spreading traditions, superstitions, and religions of mankind (14).

After the dispatch of a material son and daughter to Urantia had been approved on high, Van and

Amadon led their followers in preparing a garden site for the couple (15). Thirty-seven thousand years ago, Adam and Eve arrived and took up the administration of Urantia. Van and Amadon had transplanted the tree of life to the Garden of Eden for the use of the Adamic couple. Shortly after Adam and Eve arrived, Van and Amadon returned to system headquarters, after nearly half a million years of ministering on this small and needy world, leaving behind them a truly living legacy (16).

A land forgotten by history

The earliest recorded mention of Urartu is in ancient Assyrian inscriptions of the thirteenth century B.C., a time before Urartu had become consolidated as a state. At that time, the Assyrians applied the term *Uruartri* to the loose groupings of people in the region where Urartu was later to appear. The Assyrians also referred to these peoples as the *Nairi* (17). (Could this be connected with the *Nerites* referred to in *The URANTIA Book?*) (18).

In the year 860 B.C., the Urartian kingdom was formed under its first king, Aramu, and the Assyrians began referring to the new nation as *Urartu* (19). The Urartians, however, referred to their country as the *land of Biaini*. Scholars somehow derive the word *Van*, as in *Lake Van* (and perhaps nearby *Lake Sevan*), from the word *Biaini* and sometimes refer to Urartu as the *Kingdom of Van* (20).

The Urartians were overthrown in 590 B.C. by the Medes and some others formerly held subject by the Urartians. After the destruction of Urartu, a strange thing happened: Other empires have disappeared from the scene of human affairs and lived on in history: the Assyrians, for example; but the vanished civilization of Urartu was completely forgotten. Its great successes were ascribed to its enemies. Its name was lost to the world except for certain Assyrian inscriptions, which constituted a puzzle to later historians.

The ancient Hebrews knew the Urartians and had dealings with them, but the Old Testament mistakenly refers to them by a distorted name. Similarly, the name of a mountain vital to the Hebrew tradition has been distorted through the corruption of the name of Urartu. Professor Boris Petrovskii, a researcher into the Urartian Kingdom, writes of the Hebrew corruption of the name *Urartu* as follows:

"The name was preserved in the Old Testament in the corrupt form 'Ararat,' which in the Latin version became 'Armenia.' When the Massoretic writers were vocalising the text of the Bible they inserted the vowel *a* into words which were unknown to them, so that 'Urartu' became 'Ararat'; and it is only within very recent years that the Qumran scrolls have yielded a form of the name with the semi-vowel *w* in the first syllable (21)."

Two Old Testament references to Urartians are described by Professor Petrovskii as follows:

"A passage in the *Book of Jeremia* dated to the fourth year of the reign of King Zedekiah (i.e., 594 B.C.) talks of calling together against Babylon the Medes, the Urartians ('Ararat'), the Mannaeans ('Minni') and the Scythians ('Aschenaz') (22)."

And

"The Old Testament preserves a recollection ... that Sennacherib's sons, having killed their father, fled to Urartu (the 'land of Ararat' or 'land of Armenia') (23)."

Today, almost any Bible atlas includes Urartu on its maps of the ancient world and explains that *Ararat* in the Bible really refers to *Urartu*

Professor Seton Lloyd, another researcher into Urartu, has this to say about the ancient civilization:

"Urartu is now being presented to us as a nation--and in its time a very great nation--whose history and even identity seem to have been completely expunged from the records of human memory for two-and-a-half thousand years. Yet today, everything about it--its racial characteristics, political and economic history and its art--constitute it one of the most intriguing problems in Near Eastern Archaeology (24)."

The Urartian Culture

It is generally agreed that the Urartians arose from the Hurrians and employed a language similar to Hurrian. These mountaineers built great fortresses on overlooks throughout the highlands of Urartu. Their kingdom supported huge building programs. Palace remains show evidence of economic might. Much of their art has been recovered, particularly works in bronze. The art of Urartu contains abundant depictions referring to the Cult of the Tree--images of sacred trees guarded by seraphim and genii and sometimes attended by a king or kings.



SACRED TREE WITH ATTENDANTS. Extreme stylization of tree indicates that tradition was already ancient. (Urartian, detail of bronze helmet of King Sarduri II, 760-743 B.C. Hermitage Museum, Leningrad).

This persistent portrayal of the tree of life with its guarding celestial beings pervaded the Urartian culture. For generations, personal seals imprinted the sacred tree on correspondence carried throughout the empire (25). Rulers and administrators sipped wine from bronze cups stamped with the emblem of the tree (26). Urartian warriors carried the symbol of the sacred tree to battle on bronze belts (27) and pointed helmets (28). Carved stones displayed the sacred tree throughout the land (29). Colorful wall paintings (30) and carved columns (31) in palaces and other buildings repeated the recurring theme.



SACRED TREE WITH ATTENDANTS ON LID FROM STEATITE JAR.
(Urartian, 8th Century B.C. Armenian Historical Museum, Erevan).

The Urartians were formidable in war. The Assyrians mounted attacks on Urartian fortresses, but there were periods when they were careful to cultivate the good will of these mountain dwellers. In 714 B.C., for example, Sargon, at the head of his Assyrian army, sacked some Urartian strongholds; but in 654 B.C., the later Assyrian king Ashurbanipal, at the celebration of his victory over King Teuman of Elam and capture of Susa, received emissaries from Urartu's King Rusa. According to Assyrian annals recording the event,

"Rusa, king of Urartu, heard of the mightiness of my gods and was overcome by terror at my majesty. Then he sent his princes to Arbela to bring me greetings (32)."

In 590 B.C., Urartu was sacked and burned. Only hulks remained. The dust and winds of time did their work. It was not until about a hundred years ago that researchers began to connect the ruins throughout the Anatolian highlands with the vague references to Urartu in the Assyrian records; it had previously been believed that they were Assyrian (33). Not until 1936 was the first systematic excavation of a major Urartian fortress begun (34).

After the disappearance of Urartu as a political entity, the Armenians dominated the ancient highlands, absorbing portions of the previous Urartian culture in the process. More recently the Armenians, like their Urartian predecessors, have met tragic and depopulating devastations in these ancestral homelands. The hand of fate seems not yet to have completed its drama of violent readjustment in the Anatolian highlands.

Some questions

A casual reading of *The URANTIA Book* might give the impression that Van's headquarters were primarily in the Lake Van area (35). A more detailed analysis and comparison of statements in *The URANTIA Book* indicates, however, that Van's principal headquarters were in the foothills south of the Kopet Daugh, where Adamson subsequently settled (36). In this connection, *The URANTIA Book* explains that the *Vanites* (early followers of Van) and their descendants *later* settled about the shores of Lake Van and their *subsequent* traditions developed around this area (37).

It would be interesting to speculate on the racial makeup of the early followers of Van and their relationship to the better known peoples of today: the Armenians, for example. This is a subject for another study. We know that the human followers of Van and Amadon who subsequently reproduced--the non-immortal individuals--were of the Andonite race, as were their modified human followers, none of whom reproduced. We also know that the ascendant corporeal volunteers

resembled their modified associates, at least in skin color (38). The bodies of these rematerialized volunteers were of the same order as the body of later-appearing Machiventa Melchizedek, who was similarly supplied with a fabricated body for special planetary service; in personal appearance, Machiventa Melchizedek resembled the people around him, but he possessed a commanding presence (39). The early Andonites, half a million years before Van and Amadon, somewhat resembled present-day eskimos both in general appearance and skin color (40). We do not know how much change occurred in the Andonic race during the intervening one-half million years before the times of Van and Amadon. The Nodites, being descendants of the modified Andonites, underwent some changes because of artificially encountered mutations (41), but might have kept a skin color similar to that of the Andonites. The later-appearing *Adamsonites* in the Turkestani locale previously inhabited by Van and Amadon were the ancestors of the early greeks (42).

Events of vast significance have occurred in that small area of the world, ringing down their consequences through the ages. Perhaps some day we shall know more about this subject. One thing is becoming increasingly clear: The modern revelation contained in *The URANTIA Book* is not merely a theoretical article of belief to be sheltered from all links with external reality. Even the word *Urantia*, which we *URANTIA Book* readers know as the name of our planet, is not, it now seems, new to this world (a possibility that brings a comforting sense of continuity with the past): the similarity between *Urantian* and *Urtian* is too close--the ubiquity of the *Ur* prefix too universal. Perhaps someday scholars will find a new inscription or discover a new language fact and show that the exact term *Urantia* has been in widespread use on our world for ages upon ages.

The word *Urantia*, the revealed universe name of our planet, was known to Van. Derivatives of this word have abounded in the area where Van dwelt, working their way into the languages and traditions of men since time immemorial. Some are obvious, while others are speculative: *Urtu--Ur--King Ursa--Ural Mountains*. Perhaps it is wrong to look to ancient definitions of the word *Ur* and its derivatives to find clues to the significance of the name *Urantia*. Perhaps, as a revealed name, this word has given all human languages their variously and imperfectly perceived interpretations of the true universe meaning of the prefix *Ur*.

It might seem strange that the Urtians referred to themselves as *Biaini* and not *Urtians*, but one hundred and fifty thousand years of fraternizing with an immortal, yet visible, being seems a valid experience to celebrate in one's racial and cultural name. It might also seem strange that it was the Assyrians who used the word *Urtu*. But *The URANTIA Book*, a masterpiece of correlation, has answers for many questions as they arise, even those hardly humanly foreseeable at the time of its writing. A small phrase among the more than one million superb words in this book simply informs us that the early Vanites were the ancestors of the Assyrians (43).

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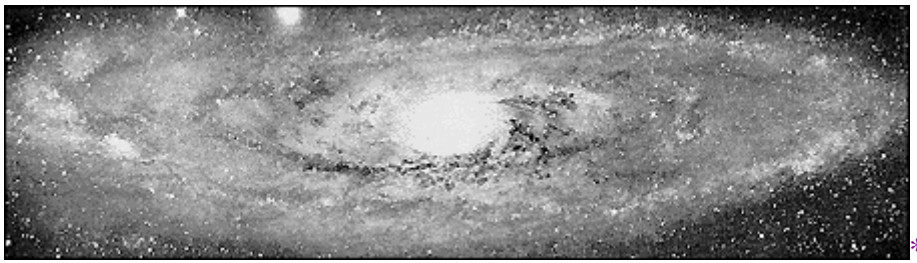
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Footnotes

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 3. **UB**, pp 756:5,6 [\(ok\)](#)
 4. **UB**, pp 745:3-7; 826:1 [\(ok\)](#)
 5. **UB**, pp 757:6-758:1 [\(ok\)](#)
 6. **UB**, pp 755:5; 756:1-2; 756:7-8 [\(ok\)](#)
 7. **UB**, pp 759:5 [\(ok\)](#)
 8. **UB**, pp 759:6-7 [\(ok\)](#)
 9. **UB**, pp 759:8 [\(ok\)](#)
 10. **UB**, pp 760:2 [\(ok\)](#)
 11. **UB**, pp 822:4 [\(ok\)](#)
 12. **UB**, pp 861:2,5; 860:8; 862:3,4; 822:4; 759:5,7 [\(ok\)](#)
 13. **UB**, pp 759:5; 759:8; 760:2; 760:4 [\(ok\)](#)
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 15. **UB**, pp 821:1-825:6 [\(ok\)](#)
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 17. **Piotrovsky**, pp 43-45; 50-51 **Piotrovskii**, pp 1 [\(ok\)](#)
 18. **UB**, pp 877:1 [\(ok\)](#)
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 20. **Piotrovskii**, pp 5; **Piotrovsky**, pp 50-51 [\(ok\)](#)
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 25. **Piotrovskii**, pp 72, 74; **Piotrovsky**, pp 127,157 [\(ok\)](#)
 26. **Piotrovsky**, pp 153 [\(ok\)](#)
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 28. **Piotrovskii**, pp 46; **Piotrovsky**, pp 160 [\(ok\)](#)
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 30. **Piotrovskii**, pp 78-79; **Piotrovsky**, pp 70; **Lloyd**, pp 120 [\(ok\)](#)
 31. **Piotrovsky**, pp 132 [\(ok\)](#)
(ok)
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Astronomy and the Superuniverse

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A *galaxy* is an enormous group of stars, planets, nebulae, and other celestial bodies traveling as a unit through the realms of space. *The URANTIA Book* has a lot to say about the structure of our galaxy, not all of it in agreement with the current teachings of astronomy. Since the writing of *The URANTIA Book*, almost fifty years ago, science has come into agreement on some originally contested points.

The URANTIA Book teaches that in the creation there are exactly seven inhabited galaxies, to which it refers as *superuniverses*. The seven superuniverses swing one after another around the *Isle of Paradise*, the *center of all things*, in a great ellipse lying in the *plane of creation*. Surrounding the *superuniverse space level*, farther out but still in the plane of creation, are the *outer space levels*, four concentric rings of evolving energy: future universes in the making (1).

Galactic outlines

Science describes the galaxy as: 1) a central, bulging *nucleus* of undetermined radius surrounded by 2) a flat, elliptical *galactic plane* about fifty thousand light years in radius and several hundred light years thick, which in turn is surrounded by 3) a spherical *halo* of fifteen-thousand-light-year radius consisting of a light sprinkling of luminous bodies. Turning to *The URANTIA Book*, the galaxy is described as a vast plane, an elongated-circular grouping of bodies whose number decreases away from the chief plane of our material universe (2), a description that could accommodate science's current but ever-changing picture. Most of the luminous bodies visible to the naked eye are in our galaxy, say both astronomy and *The URANTIA Book* (3).

The first disagreement involves the Milky Way, a vast disk of stars seen edgewise in the night sky as a thick, white line. To astronomers, the Milky Way is the galaxy; to *The URANTIA Book*, the Milky Way is the *central nucleus* of the galaxy (4). The galaxy rotates about its center, say astronomy and *The URANTIA Book*. Astronomy places this center some thirty thousand light years away in the central galactic bulge, in the direction of the constellation Sagittarius. According to *The URANTIA Book*, it's two hundred thousand light years from us (from our system capital), somewhere in the central plane of the Milky Way (5).

Fifty thousand light years is the distance from the center of the galaxy to its outermost edge, say the astronomers. Actually, says *The URANTIA Book*, the distance is two hundred fifty thousand light years (it could be even more) (6). This is the distance from the galactic center to the outermost system of *inhabited* worlds, a distance *The URANTIA Book* says will increase as creation continues: the galaxy is growing larger (7).

Sagittarius checkpoint

Ten huge physical systems called *major sectors* whirling about the galactic center--a great sun cluster--constitute the galaxy, according to *The URANTIA Book*. (It would seem, in view of the flatness of the galaxy, that these orbits would be parallel to the galactic plane.) Each major sector consists of one hundred *minor sectors* orbiting the respective major sector center, a minor sector consisting of exactly one hundred *local universes*--star clouds, offspring of one or more nebulae--orbiting the minor sector center (8). Above the local universe level, administrative units coincide with physical systems; at the local universe level and below, a single administrative unit can encompass several physical systems (9). Administratively, a local universe has one hundred constellations, a constellation one hundred local systems, a local system up to one thousand inhabited or inhabitable planets not counting planets settled in light and life (10).

Physically, our planet lies halfway out in one of the arms of the former nebula that gave it birth. Working upward in physical concept, our PLANET orbits the SUN, which orbits the FORMER NEBULAR CENTER, which orbits the LOCAL UNIVERSE CENTER, which orbits the MINOR SECTOR CENTER, which orbits the MAJOR SECTOR CENTER, which orbits PARADISE, which is the CENTER OF ALL THINGS (11). These multiple motions, says *The URANTIA Book*, are a source of confusion for our planet-bound astronomers (12).

The constellation Sagittarius contains an important astronomical center point, according to both astronomy and *The URANTIA Book*, but one far different in the two teachings. Astronomy teaches that the *entire galaxy* is centered, and rotates about, a point located 30,000 light years from Urantia in the direction of Sagittarius. *The URANTIA Book*, however, teaches that the center in Sagittarius is our *minor sector* center, orbital point of the one hundred local universes in our minor sector (13). (As previously mentioned, *The URANTIA Book* places the galaxy's center some 200,000 light years from Urantia). Misinterpretation of the significance of the rotation point in Sagittarius must be a source of profound distortion in astronomy's picture of the galaxy. Theoretically, both views could agree, *in terms of direction only*, if the galactic center and minor sector center should happen to be in temporary alignment with respect to our current observational position.

Measuring distances

The four methods in use today for measuring astronomical distances are parallax observation of the proper motion of nearby objects, comparison of apparent luminosity and spectral type, observation of Cepheid variables, and observation of the Doppler frequency shift to deduce radial velocity.

The Cepheid variables method is accurate, says *The URANTIA Book*, but only up to about a million light years (14). Used primarily to measure distances to distant galaxies, this method must be introducing errors into astronomical measurements and theories. Astronomy might not be realizing the potential accuracy of this method even at smaller distances. Using the method of Cepheid variables, astronomers calculate the distance to the galaxy Andromeda as 2.7 million light years, where *The URANTIA Book* teaches that light from this galaxy takes almost a million years to reach us--another way (to our current understanding) of saying that Andromeda is just under one million light years away (15). A major difficulty in comparing astronomical figures from *The URANTIA Book* with those from astronomy is the impossibility of obtaining final figures from astronomy. On earth, a distance measured as a mile will likely remain at least approximately a mile. But astronomy has calculated the distance to Andromeda, for example, as follows: in 1907 as 19 light years (16) by stellar parallax--in

1911 as a minimum of 1600 light years (17) by observation of novae--in the mid-1920's as 800,000 light years (18) by Cepheid variables--and in the mid-1950's as 2.7 million light years (19) by changing the Cepheid variables scale to suit the expectations of astronomers. Tomorrow's figures are yet to come.

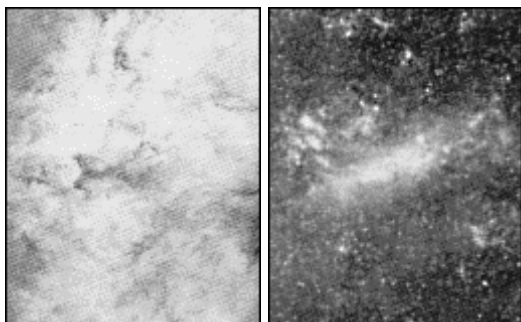
The Doppler technique, which determines the radial velocity of a luminous object by the apparent shift of its color due to motion (more violet for approaching objects, redder for receding objects), receives good grades from *The URANTIA Book*, but only when used on objects in the superuniverse space level. *The URANTIA Book* teaches that this method is greatly in error when applied to objects in the outer space regions for several reasons, the most important being the rotation of the outer space rings (in alternate directions between successive rings), which can cause the mistaken impression that bodies in the outer space levels are traveling through space at fantastically high speeds (20). No further explanation is given, but it would seem from this that the rotating *space* in the outer space levels carries the bodies in the outer space levels with it, making it appear that these bodies are traveling *through* space, at tremendously high velocities, instead of *with* space (see reference to de Sitter's concepts of space below). *The URANTIA Book* refers to *space* as a *positive reality*; particular nascent forces, from which energy and matter are woven (21).

Through the red shift, astronomers have observed these apparent (and primarily receding) velocities of objects in the outer space levels. This has led some to the idea of The Big Bang, a primordial explosion that supposedly occurred when all the matter (or pre-matter) in existence was in a tiny ball. The results of that explosion, according to the theory of The Big Bang, are the galaxies, in headlong flight away from each other and the site of the explosion. Some astronomers have gone further, to visualize a future slowing down of the expanding cosmos, its reversal of direction and picking up of speed toward the point of the original explosion, and the final compacting together again of the entire creation into a basketball-sized tombstone of reality, all the worlds, all the hopes, dreams, and possibilities of all the living creatures of all space and time--squashed. This is wrong, according to *The URANTIA Book*, which teaches *space respiration*, a gentle expansion and contraction of *space itself* in a two-billion-year cycle of moderate motion not interfering with the continuation of life or the development of the universe (22). The idea that space itself is expanding was suggested in 1917 by Dutch astronomer Willem de Sitter in a dynamic version of Einstein's static universe of curved space. In de Sitter's universe, the curvature of space is constantly decreasing (light would travel in an expanding spiral), resulting in an expansion of space and the apparent moving apart of objects at rest in space--in effect, movement *with* space but not *through* space (23) (see discussion on red shift above).

Developments

Doctor Bart J. Bok, an authority on the Milky Way, has recently described a new view of the Milky Way, where the Milky Way includes a new component, the *corona*, an unseen domain of matter--perhaps dust and gas--and is far more extensive than the previously accepted radius of fifty thousand light years (24). This concept begins in some ways to approach the *URANTIA Book* description of the galaxy; but it also redefines the term *Milky Way* always to designate the entire galaxy, a possible source of future confusion for readers of *The URANTIA Book*, which teaches that the Milky Way (old definition) is only the *nucleus* of the galaxy. *URANTIA Book* readers might do well to replace this newly ambiguous term with two terms in future discussions: for example, *Visual Milky Way* or *Original Milky Way* (old meaning, as used in *The URANTIA Book*) in contrast to *Milky Way Galaxy* (new meaning, now becoming accepted by science).

At the writing of *The URANTIA Book*, in 1934, the URANTIA Revelators said that improved observing devices would soon reveal many new objects to us and expand our ideas of the size of the galaxy (25). This is happening now. They also taught that objects then considered *outside* the galaxy would subsequently be recognized as *inside* the galaxy (26). They flatly contradicted then-contemporary astronomy by saying that the Magellanic Cloud is a part of our galaxy (using their now-familiar device of wording the improvement over contemporary scientific knowledge in language artfully crafted to be acceptable both before and after the newer scientific discoveries) (27). It wasn't until 1974 that astronomers began to wonder if the galaxy might be larger than previously thought (28) and Einasto, of Estonia, put forward the idea that the Large and Small Clouds of Magellan are a part of our galaxy (29).



ABOVE LEFT: THE CONSTELLATION SAGITTARIUS, looking toward the supposed center of the Milky Way Galaxy.

ABOVE RIGHT: THE LARGE MAGELLANIC CLOUD, only recently recognized by science as a part of the Milky Way Galaxy.

Now, almost fifty years after *The URANTIA Book* was written, Doctor Bok writes of astronomy's new view of the galaxy (as first put forth by einasto) that the galaxy includes:

"the two small nearby galaxies called the Large and Small Clouds of Magellan and a number of dwarf spheroidal galaxies, of which seven are now known."

One of the dwarf spheroidal galaxies of which he writes lies some 450,000 light years from the center of the Milky Way. Another, the dwarf galaxy Carina, is thought to be 325,000 light years from the center of the Milky Way (30). This is a dramatic change from the fifty-thousand-mile radius that astronomy would have used to judge *The URANTIA Book* at the time when it was written.

(NOTE: Could the seven dwarf spheroidal galaxies mentioned above be connected with the ten major sectors of the galaxy? *The URANTIA Book* teaches that at the time of its writing our astronomers had roughly identified eight of the galaxy's ten major sectors (31), but does not indicate whether or not they were recognized as being within our galaxy--a remote possibility in view of the then underestimation of the size of the galaxy. We were told that the major sectors would be recognized as huge and reasonably symmetrical star clusters) (32).

About differences

The URANTIA Book is a *spiritual* revelation, whose spiritual teachings and presentations of history and destiny will never be found to be in error (33). Its *scientific* statements, however, are in terms of the knowledge of the people originally receiving them. As scientific knowledge advances, these statements will be seen to be in error (34). But not every disagreement between science and *The URANTIA Book* is automatically such an instance. For example: In the few months between the writing of this article and its pre-publication review, the local library replaced its fourth edition (copyright 1977) of the encyclopedia used as the primary source volume of the article (35) with a fifth edition of the same publication (copyright this year--1982). So much confusion resulted in the review that a fourth edition had to be located. Just under "Galaxy," for example, the fifth edition had: 1) added the galactic corona to the galaxy; 2) disowned the 50,000 light year radius of the galaxy published in the fourth edition and replaced it with a radius of at least 325,000 light years, the difference between disagreement or agreement with *The URANTIA Book*; and 3) inserted a 5000-light-year-radius by 3000-light-year-thickness figure for the central galactic bulge where the fourth edition had written that no figure was available. Under "Star Cloud," the fifth edition read exactly the same as the fourth, except that it omitted one sentence: a statement that the Large and Small Clouds of Magellan are not in our galaxy--again, the difference between disagreement or agreement with *The URANTIA Book*.

It would seem wise to hesitate before condemning scientific statements in The URANTIA Book solely on the basis of apparent disagreement with the current but changing views of science. Science is a tool. Like other tools, it can be used erroneously, especially if its limitations are not recognized by those who use it. The fact that science often expresses its findings in numbers commands an air of exactness, even though its numbers are often wrong. Doctor Lewis Thomas, Chancellor of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, has addressed this problem of the inability of scientists and laymen to appreciate the true nature of science, in the following words:

"The endeavor is not, as is sometimes thought, a way of building up a solid, indestructible body of immutable truth, fact laid precisely upon fact in the manner of twigs in an ant hill. Science is not like this at all: it keeps changing, shifting, revising, discovering that it was wrong and then heaving itself explosively apart to redesign everything Ordinarily scientists do not talk this way about their trade, because there is always in the air the feeling that this time we have it right, this time we are about to come into possession of a finished science knowing almost everything about everything" (36).

Doctor Thomas' observation is borne out, and *URANTIA Book* readers supported in delaying judgement on discrepancies between the astronomical teachings of science and *The URANTIA Book*, in the experience of astronomer Doctor Bart Bok (and his colleagues), who writes:

"I remember the mid-1970's as a time when I and my fellow watchers were notably self-assured. The broad outlines of the galaxy seemed reasonably well established We did not suspect it would soon be necessary to revise the radius of the Milky Way upward by a factor of three or more and to increase its mass by as much as a factor of 10" (37).

* * *

* The photo at the top of the page is of the Andromeda Nebula. (ok)

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2. **UB**, pp 167:4-6 [\(ok\)](#)
3. **UB**, pp 167:4; 130:5 [\(ok\)](#)
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5. **UB**, pp 359:last; 168:9 [\(ok\)](#)
6. **UB**, pp 359:8-360:1 [\(ok\)](#)
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9. **UB**, pp 455:2-3; 359:1 [\(ok\)](#)
10. **UB**, pp 166:3-5; 167:1-2 [\(ok\)](#)
11. **UB**, pp 168:4-10 [\(ok\)](#)
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14. **UB**, pp 459:5 [\(ok\)](#)
15. **UB**, pp 170:1 [\(ok\)](#)
16. **Azimov**, pp 84 [\(ok\)](#)
17. **Azimov**, pp 90 [\(ok\)](#)
18. **Azimov**, pp 92 [\(ok\)](#)
19. **Azimov**, pp 203-207 [\(ok\)](#)
20. **UB**, pp 134:3-4; 129:last-130:2 [\(ok\)](#)
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(ok)
23. **Azimov**, pp 192-193 [\(ok\)](#)
24. **Bok**, pp 92-120 [\(ok\)](#)
25. **UB**, pp 130:last-131:1 [\(ok\)](#)
26. **UB**, pp 130:last-131:1 [\(ok\)](#)
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28. **Bok**, pp 94 [\(ok\)](#)
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33. **UB**, pp 1109:3-4 [\(ok\)](#)
34. **UB**, pp 1109:3-4 [\(ok\)](#)
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