

THE NEW MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

The Forum was the group that met and studied the Urantia Papers before their publication. Not only did the members of this group receive and react to the revelatory material, they were intimately connected with its inception. They had much to do with giving shape to the Urantia Papers, because these papers and individual portions of papers came in response to the questions and discussion of Forum members. The end result you know as The Urantia Book, a work intended to be seen and studied by millions in the coming centuries.

Some of the dialogue with the superhumans was not intended for publication and formal presentation to the world. There were probably many different reasons. Much of it seems to have been scaffolding. Some written material from the superhuman revelators had to do with directions for initial publication of The Urantia Book and the formation of organizations. In its time, this material was very meaningful, but once its purpose is served, its usefulness is gone. Some material satisfied curiosity but was intended for a relatively few people as it was quite informal or personal in nature. Some material was sensitive, classified as it were.

Most of this writing is now gone. Most was directed to be destroyed by the superhumans. Some fragments still exist. And memories of others persist.

The writing which is the subject of this paper existed at least as late as the 1970's and therefore I trust it was not extra-sensitive in nature or it would have been destroyed earlier. I would consider it to be in the realm of writing limited in the extent of interest and somewhat timebound as well. Therefore, while it does not belong in The Urantia Book, it is likely to be of some interest to many current day students of the book.

I recall hearing this paper read and it was to my memory written by Midwayers. It was perhaps 2000-3000 words in length and it obviously had appeared in response to a question by Forumites. And the paper answered a question of approximately this meaning and wording:

"Now that we know that Jesus was born on August 21st and not December 25th, what should we do about celebrating Christmas."

The answer imprinted strongly in my mind. However, I do not have a photographic memory and regret that the following paraphrase is not hardly so eloquent as what I heard. But at least I recall the essence of the answer and it is as follows:

It is true that you know December 25th not to have been the birthday of your Creator Son. You will no doubt develop many new traditions around a celebration on August 21st. Even so, you have

evolved many worthy customs, traditions and meanings associated with the celebration of Christmas. You should act in a slow and careful manner in altering these practices. Do not dispose of them in a precipitous manner. That would serve to take something out of your lives that contains much truth, beauty, and goodness. Rather than eliminate this holiday celebration and all that is associated therewith, we would like to see you transmute Christmas into something new, to elevate it to new and higher meanings and values.

We would propose that you let the day stand as a celebration not only of the gift of Jesus, his life and teachings, but also as a time to honor and remember the lives and teachings of all the many religious leaders and teachers of truth down through the ages on Urantia. You have a rich heritage of many noble souls who sought to advance and uplift truth on your sphere and often gave their lives in the attempt. This heritage as portrayed in The Urantia Book begins with Onagar and extends down to the time of Guru Nanak.

This relatively small number of mortals gave so much to your world. You would do well to have a time for remembering them for their devotion to the advancement of truth on Urantia. You have no current holy day which honors them. Christmas, which already combines traditions deriving from Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity as well as various primitive cults would be well-suited to serving as a reminder of the gift of truth from the many mortal and immortal sources down through the ages.

And because you honor all these teachers of truth from all faiths, Christmas also serves as a day of celebration of the Brotherhood of Man. Already your Christmas traditions carry many themes relating to brotherhood, "Peace on earth and good will among men." If you form the practice of honoring the religious leaders of all faiths, it would be a powerful unifying force and you would attract many others to follow your lead. In this way, you can take a day which you may initially have thought to have lost some meaning for you and give it new meaning, even more meaning than it had before.

The many mortal and superhuman teachers of truth mentioned in The Urantia Book include, but are not limited to, the following:

Onagar
Mansant
Fantad
Porshunta
Orlandof
Singlangton
Onamonalonton
Orvonon

The Caligastia One Hundred and their one hundred human assistants - I include all of them because all served faithfully for 300,000 years and it would appear that those who joined the rebellion were sincere in following their leader.

Van
Amadon

The Vanites
The Amadonites
The Nodites
Adam and Eve
Adamson and Ratta
The Adamites
The Sethites/Amosad
Enoch
The Andites
Machiventa Melchizedek and his missionaries
Amenemope
Ikhnaton
Abraham
Isaac
Moses
Joshua
Elihu
Samuel
Elisha
Amos
Hosea
First Isaiah
Jeremiah
Second Isaiah
Ezekial
Ezra
Daniel
Haggai
Malachi
Gautama Siddhartha
Confucius
Lao Tse
Mo Ti
Zoroaster
Jainist teachers
Pindar
Xenophanes
Anaxagoras
Socrates
Plato
Aristotle
John the Baptist
Jesus of Nazareth
The twelve apostles
Abner and the apostles of John
The women's corps
The seventy evangelists
Rodan of Alexandria
Stephen
Paul of Tarsus
Philo of Alexandria
Barnabas
James, brother of Jesus
Athanasius

Pantaenus
Clement
Mohammed
Martin Luther
Guru Nanak

The many unknown or now barely known teachers of truth of all ages

Attaching this new meaning to Christmas provides an explosion of possibilities for new traditions that can be both fun and meaningful. I have no doubt that a great many new practices can evolve which will return more of the religious meaning to Christmas and moderate the material aspects of this holiday.

It was due to the message regarding Christmas that several celebrations were held by First Urantia Society in Chicago in the 1980's attempting to incorporate these ideas. I know that this same concept was also employed in a few Wisconsin study groups. A number of different services have been tried as well as decorations relating to the idea. One of the Urantia Papers that seems well-suited to being used in conjunction with the new meaning of Christmas is Paper 92. However, it is not my intent to discuss or explore specific practices. I am simply interested in passing along the concept that Christmas could be a time to celebrate the religions of the world, the races of man, and the religious teachers who contributed to our planetary heritage.

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