

A Commentary on Urantia Book Apocrypha

by Mark Kulieke

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Most people are aware of the fact that the superhuman sponsors of The Urantia Book wrote much material that does not appear in the book. They also had substantial dialogue with the Contact Commission which was recorded, but does not appear in the book. There seems to be some confusion and a fair amount of consternation with many regarding this material. I would like to set the record straight in so far as it is possible regarding these writings.

This extra material falls into three categories:

Category 1: Papers or fragments of papers which were given to the Forum, but subsequently recalled. By this I mean material that was originally intended to be part of The Urantia Book. Such recalled material was gone as quickly as it came through the years that the papers were coming, approximately 1924 to 1942. It was destroyed either by the revelators themselves or by members of the Contact Commission. Much of it seems to have been regarded as material that was too "over our heads," meaning too difficult of comprehension. As an example, the purposes for each one of the seven superuniverses were originally given. Now we have only the purpose of our own, Orvonton.

Perhaps some of the recalls were due to reactions among the Forum members that were not altogether fortunate in the eyes of the superhuman revelators. They used the Forum for dialogue and as a test group and edited the papers according to their questions and reactions. This editing was a constant ongoing process for nearly 20 years. Some Forum members have dim recollections about some of this recalled material. On the whole, they seem to remember very little or are disinclined to talk about it. It does not seem that we are intended to know about these matters.

Category 2: Informal exchanges (chitchat) between superhuman revelators and human Contact Commission members. Most of this was personal in nature or so informal that it was not recorded. What was recorded is long since gone. It was very time limited in nature. A few memories persist among the Urantia readers and students, usually short anecdotes. As an example, when the Contact Commission was told the revelators started working on the Urantia project during the Middle Ages, Lena Sadler asked: "What took you so long?" There was a long pause before a Midwayer answered: "Oh, we see what you mean." While it may not matter whether some of these anecdotes are known, they are probably of minimal significance.

Category 3: More formal presentations which were intended for repeated readings and study and action plans by the Contact Commission and the Forum. Some people regularly refer to this extra material as "instructions" and certainly some of it was in the nature of instructions. Some use the word "mandates" to refer to this material. I'm not aware that any surviving fragments constitute mandates. I would say that some material, now gone, may have been in the category of mandates to the Forum, the Contact Commission and the Urantia Foundation because all groups entered into formal agreements and commitments with the superhuman revelators.

The Forum and the Contact Commission have long since fulfilled their roles and accomplished their missions. The Foundation was the formal heir to the Contact Commission and was supposed to maintain a formal commitment to our celestial overseers. To me, the evidence of the last few years suggests that this arrangement has been disrupted. No one is being currently "mandated" by any surviving writings to my knowledge. The surviving Contact Commission members received no further regular communications from the superhumans after 1952 until the death of the last one in 1982. I understand there was one brief intervention of an emergency nature in 1980, the details and validity of which are disputed. Short of that, the instructions from superhumans appear to be past history.

I think the Foundation would like for you to believe they still have a superhuman link-up, as long as you don't ask them for evidence or details about their relationship.

The only one of the three categories of writings that still persist in very fragmentary form is the third category and that is the category I want to focus on. I don't believe any current day Urantians are in a formal agreement with the superhuman revelators unless this has occurred personally and privately, in which case we are all completely in the dark about such matters. A few people make special claims publicly, but whether you want to believe them or not is your own personal business. Now, and probably for a long time to come, each one of us is equally on his or her own as to the best course to follow in any matter concerning the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

The surviving formal superhuman writings outside of The Urantia Book may in a general sense constitute instruction, but I think the word that best characterizes it is "guidance." There is no reason to be intimidated by it. You don't have to believe it was superhuman in origin. It is general guidance which can help to inspire us in our work and give us a general direction to work toward. It is not very detailed, so we all have to think for ourselves now. We cannot blindly follow some instruction.

As an example, I regard the following statement(s) of superhuman origin as general encouragement and guidance:

"You must learn to possess your souls in patience. You are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Over-rapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

There are some good clues in that paragraph about how we could direct our energies, but in the main, it is saying to 'hang in here and do your work and you'll come through.' It does not unequivocally tell us what to do.

Many people have asked me why this extra guidance written or dictated by superhumans was not included in The Urantia Book itself. It comes from superhumans; shouldn't it be in the book?

Well, the nature of this material is such that it did not belong in the book. The Major portion of it had to do with how to bring the book into being, how to handle the book, how to get it published, and after publication, how to form and deal with groups connected with the book. Most of it was very time bound, hence its destruction at different points in the last 40 years or so. I know of at least three or four points when this superhuman guidance was destroyed, the last being 1982 when the last member of the Contact Commission died. Only a few often-quoted fragments survived.

This instructional writing was in the nature of an umbilical cord from superhuman to human, highly useful at the time it is needed, but totally superfluous once the birth of the revelation has occurred. That birth was completed almost 40 years ago. While one kind of connection appears severed, every day, all the time, each one of us has an actual fragment of God within giving us new, up-to-date, personal guidance toward dealing with life's situations, including any business concerning the Fifth Epochal Revelation. The bad news is we are on our own. The good news is that we are NEVER alone. We are all completely outfitted for the journey which lies ahead.
