

Journal of The Brotherhood of Man Library, an Information, Telecommunication and Lending Service Resource for Students of *The URANTIA Book*.

Favorite Places
from
The Urantia Book

The Way

"He who rules his own self is greater than he who captures a city. Self-mastery is the measure of man's moral nature and the indicator of his spiritual development. In the old order you fasted and prayed; as the new creature of the rebirth of the spirit, you are taught to believe and rejoice. In the Father's kingdom you are to become new creatures; old things are to pass away; behold I show you how all things are to become new. And by your love for one another you are to convince the world that you have passed from bondage to liberty, from death into life everlasting.

"By the old way you seek to suppress, obey, and conform to the rules of living; by the new way you are first transformed by the Spirit of Truth and thereby strengthened in your inner soul by the constant spiritual renewing of your mind, and so are you endowed with the power of the certain and joyous performance of the gracious, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Forget not—it is your personal faith in the exceedingly great and precious promises of God that ensures your becoming partakers of the divine nature. Thus by your faith and the spirit's transformation, you become in reality the temples of God, and his spirit actually dwells within you.

If, then, the spirit dwells within you, you are no longer bondslaves of the flesh but free and liberated sons of the spirit. The new law of the spirit endows you with the liberty of self-mastery in place of the old law of the fear of self-bondage and the slavery of self-denial. (1609)

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Suggested annual donation - \$10

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Doubt not, this kingdom of heaven which the Master taught exists within the heart of the believer, will yet be proclaimed to the Christian church, even as to all other religions, races, and nations on earth—even to every individual. (1864)

All Our Cosmologies Are Erroneous!!

Meaning of "cosmology"

What is the real meaning of the word "cosmology?" Currently it is used almost exclusively as relating to the physics and astronomy of the universe. But this exclusivity is quite recent. The "Oxford Companion to Philosophy"¹ of 1995 describes cosmology in these terms, "Traditionally a branch of metaphysics dealing with features of the world as a whole, though the term can be used synonymously with speculative philosophy in its widest sense."

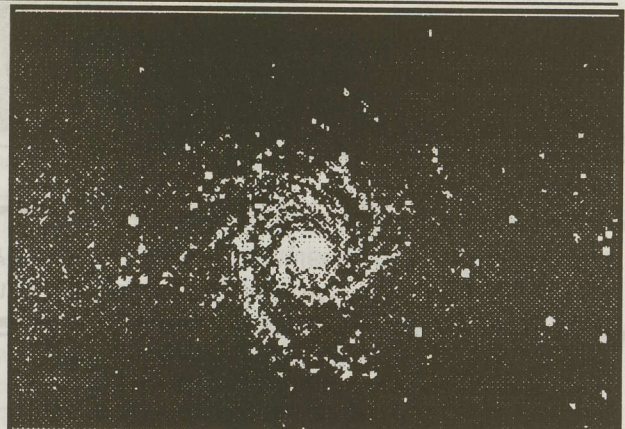
The meaning of cosmology was widely known in the early part of this century in its relation to the theistic arguments of Thomas Aquinas that became known as the "cosmological argument." Many believed that this argument constituted a complete proof of the existence of God. Put crudely, the argument followed the line that everything must have a cause, hence giving rise to an infinite regression that could only terminate with something that is uncaused. This something is "First Cause" or "Uncaused Cause" or alternatively, "God."

The truth of the "cosmological argument" was embraced by many well known philosophers and theologians including even Bertrand Russell in his early career. It is the subject of a recent book, "The Cosmological Argument" by William Rowe². "Cosmology" is derived from the Greek word *kosmos*, to which Hartrampf's Vocabularies of 1929 gave the meaning as "harmony," while The Concise Oxford Dictionary (revised edition of 1929) gave it as the "sum total of experience."

When the Urantia Papers were received in 1934/5,

*What we call
experience is often a
dreadful list of
ghastly mistakes.*

J.C. Da Costa



Galaxy NGC 1097—Just one among trillions

the general usage of "cosmology" in the English-speaking world would appear to have been reasonably described by the phrase, "the sum total of experience including experience of the universe as a whole." The revelators use the term "universe frame" in this same sense.

"Universe frame" equals "cosmology"

"Partial, incomplete, and evolving intellects would be helpless in the master universe, would be unable to form the first rational thought pattern, were it not for the innate ability of all mind, high or low, to form a universe frame in which to think. If mind cannot fathom conclusions, if it cannot penetrate to true origins, then will such mind unfailingly postulate conclusions and invent origins that it may have a means of logical thought within the frame of these mind-created postulates. And while such universe frames for creature thought are indispensable to rational intellectual operations, they are, without exception, erroneous to a greater or lesser degree." (1260)

When does our intellect cease to evolve and become complete? Since a Divine Counselor who has many times been in the presence of the Universal Father freely states, "we do not know," (87, 104, 107, etc.), the answer to that question must be "never." Logically, it follows that the universe frame in which each of us thinks will always be erroneous to a greater or lesser degree. This conclusion must apply to all created beings, a statement confirmed in the Papers in a different context where we are informed that infallibility is possessed only by those of creator status. (1768)

Universe frames and cosmologies are always erroneous

None of the revelators were of creator status.

Hence, just as our cosmology must always be a part of the "universe frame" in which we think, so must the cosmology of the authors of the Urantia Papers have been part of their "universe frame." It follows, therefore, that the cosmology of the Urantia Papers must be erroneous to some degree. Fundamentalists please note that this conclusion derives directly from the revelators own statements and is quite independent of the ambiguous phrasing of the mandate.

Urantia Book science as universe frame

What was the purpose of including science materials in the cosmology in the Papers? It certainly was not for our enlightenment, for the mandate (1109) informs us that the imparting of unearned knowledge is proscribed. Surely then it was for the purpose of giving us a temporary but more realistic universe frame in which to think, a frame that would be useful for many generations to come. However, we can be sure it was not to give us a plethora of new knowledge of a scientific nature that would demonstrate the credentials of the revelators. The Papers tell us that the "miracle" pathway to God mostly ends in a dismal debacle—and making sense of science is a task we need to do for ourselves.

Prior to the revelators description of the heavenly hierarchy and our universe careers, the only things we knew for certain about an afterlife were given to us by Jesus. These were that, "in my Father's house there are many mansions" and, in heaven, we "are not taken or given in marriage but are as the angels." The revelation banished our ignorance, thereby providing us with a whole new conceptual outlook for the meaning of creature life, its purpose and its goals.

Most Urantia Book science is from outmoded text books of early 1900's period

However, because virtually all the early readers of the Papers lacked in the dual acquisition of a solid

Any general statement is like a check drawn on a bank. Its value depends on what is there to meet it.

Ezra Pound

We thought philosophy ought to be patient and unravel people's mental blocks. Trouble with doing that is, once you've unraveled them, their heads fall off.

F. Raphael

background in science plus the history of its unfolding, there was a failure to perceive that the major portion of the Papers' science material is of a standard that was already present in text books at high school or elementary university level in the mid 1930's. Because of this, the fact that the Papers themselves deny being a divinely-dictated, errorless revelation was overlooked. And so developed the expectation that among other things, the science of the Papers would not only confirm their revelatory authority but also guide the way to new discoveries. It has taken almost fifty years for those initial expectations regarding the Papers to be recognized as erroneous by any substantial portion of the readership. Surely it is now time for a rethink about where we are heading.

Purpose of the Papers

The purpose of the Urantia Papers is best described as renewal. Mainstream Christianity deviated from the pathway for spiritual progress revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. While those deviations may possibly have been essential for the survival of Jesus' revelation, they have become an increasing hindrance as we move further and further towards a fully literate population, a population in which, very soon, a majority will have had some degree of tertiary education.

The Urantia Papers not only expose the deviations made by early Christians, they warn us that we cannot undo what was done by means of any frontal attack. Such a procedure involves conflict—and Jesus was not about conflict. We are instructed to take the positive pathway of revealing truth in our own lives and leave the task of replacing error with truth to the Spirit of Truth.

It has been the consistent policy of this journal to propound the positive path to truth. Accordingly we have attempted to expose the truth about the Urantia

Papers and their purpose—and in so doing have incurred the wrath of some Urantia Book fundamentalists.

Repercussions of being positive

Following upon some articles at the beginning of the year, we received a considerable amount of criticism plus the challenge that we have claimed that there are errors in the Papers but have failed to state what they are. In fact, none of our contributors have ever bothered to keep a detailed listing of errors. Instead, they have preferred to uncover details of the key prophetic information allowed by the mandate in order to help new readers to take the Papers seriously.

About ancient stromatolites and sedimentary rocks

However in view of the demands to reveal error, we feel it is necessary to catalogue some samples and propose to now do so. Readers of Interface might remember that the article on the origin of life on Urantia in our previous issue had a photo of one of the ancient stromatolites that exist in several regions of the world. Some of these are in excess of 3 billion years old.

In the last two decades, enormous advances have been made in the correct determining of ages of sedimentary and other rock strata. There is no use in still throwing up the criticism that radiotracer dating is unreliable. In any case, it was never the technology that was the main problem for it was highly accurate. Rather, it was the sampling methods and the interpretation of their results by field workers with little knowledge of basic science that was the main cause of confusion.

From the modern work, there can be no reasonable doubt that sedimentary beds, including stromatolites, were being laid down in oceanic environments

A myth is, of course, not a fairy story. It is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another. To explode a myth is accordingly not to deny the facts but to re-allocate them.

Gilbert Ryle

The modern age will refuse to accept a religion which is inconsistent with facts and out of harmony with its highest conceptions of truth beauty and goodness. The hour is striking for a re-discovery of the true and original foundations of present day distorted and compromised Christianity—the real life and teachings of Jesus.

(2083)

between 3 and 4 billion years ago. The ancient stromatolite we showed was the result of the activities of photosynthetic bacteria—which means that bacterial “life” has been present on the planet, and in an oceanic environment, almost as soon as Urantia was cool enough and hospitable enough to permit life to exist. Thus new readers must be confused when they read that the first life implantations were made about half a billion years ago!

More incompatibilities

A reading of the Urantia Paper’s account of this period (page 658 through to 660), in which the primitive ocean is said to first appear just one billion years ago compared to the 3 billion years indicated by some stromatolites, will show to those with sufficiently open minds that the account given in the Papers is totally incompatible with findings of modern paleontology and geology. The reason of course is simple. Something along the lines of the account given in The Urantia Book was one of the many current theories circulating in the early part of the century—and the revelators were following the instructions of the mandate in using one of them to fill a gap in their story. For the purpose of providing a “universe frame in which to think,” it was quite adequate.

Error, mythology and universe frames

The truth of this conclusion dawned upon me when I realized that my personal universe frame was not altered in any significant way regardless of which version of Urantia’s geological history the revelators had chosen to use. All were incorrect and the revelators were not permitted to provide unearned knowledge. They assessed that a stop gap version was better for their purpose than some statement to the effect that they could say nothing.

A little thought will bring the realization that the exact details of Urantia's geological history have no significance for the kind of "universe frame" the revelators wished to provide. And, in fact, it is easily conceivable that the provision of the exact details would ultimately bring more harm than good. For example, it was the experience of Jesus and his disciples that miraculous events heightened the demand for more miracles but seldom brought recipients closer to God.

Soon after, it also dawned upon me that stories such as that of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden were also in this category. My universe frame is not significantly different whether that story is true or whether part or all of it is mythological and has some greater meaning or purpose.

A further example of highly probable error is the book's account of the beginnings of the solar system as being due to the ejection of streams of gaseous materials from the sun caused by the approach of the gigantic Angona system. (655) There were several theories of this nature that were current in the early part of the century, which eventually brought the derogatory remark that any high school student would know that such gaseous ejections would quickly disperse rather than form the nuclei for planetary growth. Along with this theory, the book's account also used the notion of an exceedingly slow growth of our planet and its moon through meteoric accretion.

Current theory is that the time scale for collapse of an original interstellar cloud into a disk is remarkably short, about 10 million years—as is the time scale for formation of planetesimals, the building blocks of planets, which can be as little as 1000 years.

Since the landings on the moon, the comparative analysis of lunar samples and meteoric materials has demonstrated that the formation of the inner planets including the earth and the moon was essentially complete 100 million years after collapse of the interstellar cloud that gave rise to the sun. The later

*Science must begin
with myths, and
with the criticism of
myths.*

Karl Popper

*The Spirit of Truth guides
you into all truth. The new
teacher will be forever
unfolding to the truth-
seeking believer that which
was so divinely folded up
in the person and nature of
the Son of Man, Jesus of
Nazareth.*

bombardment of the moon and the Earth by meteorites, comets, etc., continued intensively for another half-billion years but contributed no more than a few percent of their total mass. Thus the Earth and the moon had very close to their present mass more than four billion years ago.

This modern view is based on actual measurements of Earth, lunar, and meteoric materials and is in total contrast to The Urantia Book story that says the Earth had only two thirds of its current size just 1.5 billion years ago. But this is not at all surprising to those who have realized that the accounts of our origins were taken from theories put forward by astronomers such as Chamberlin, Moulton, Jeans, and Jeffreys and were current in the early years of our century—but have long since been abandoned as being contrary to the laws of physics.

Error is liberating!

However as a stop gap to complete a "universe frame" by the revelators, the book's picture is entirely adequate. That it is erroneous has absolutely no significant effect upon, for example, my own "universe frame" which is derived directly from that given by the revelators. The fine detail of The Urantia Book's account of planetary origins is of no importance relative to the overall cosmology presented in the book. For me, the importance of its "universe frame" must be seen in terms of its spiritual and not its material content.

Bigoted or simply foolish?

About fifty years ago, I became engaged in a discussion with a minister of religion on some recent fossil discoveries. It happened that I was unaware that he had a fundamentalist attitude to the Bible.

Apparently some comment I made was contrary to his "universe frame," and I received a long lecture on the infallibility of the biblical account which, according to him, made the age of the creation about 6000 years. When I inquired about the presence of fossils in rocks that appeared to be millions of years old, I was informed that God made it that way to confuse unbelievers like me.

Among Urantia Book readers, there are those with closed minds who class readers like me as unbelievers—just as did that Episcopalian minister. These same fundamentalist readers also insist that if any scientific evidence disagrees with The Urantia Book account, then it is science that is wrong. Recently one such reader has been injecting information from The Urantia Book into an Internet discussion forum on evolution—and has drawn the correct response (plus much derision) that many of the book's outdated statements come from high school text books of the 1930's. This is the truth, but is entirely in accord with what the revelators have themselves told us.

How much damage has been done to the cause and hopes of the revelators by such happenings in the period since first printing of the book cannot be measured. It may have been enormous. In the opinion of one now-deceased, former Foundation trustee, that damage is irreparable to the point that the Urantia revelation has already failed.

In what follows, I'm hoping to induce some fundamentalists to rethink their attitudes by relating a set of errors in the book that cannot be discounted by the assertion that the book is errorless, nor that anything that appears to indicate error must be wrong.

The Forty day problem

In Paper 193, Section 5 we can read that the Master's ascension took place early on Thursday

*For what do we live,
but to make sport for
our neighbors, and
laugh at them in our
turn?*

Jane Austen

*The teachers of this new
religion are to go out to
conquer the world with
unfailing forgiveness,
matchless goodwill, an
abounding love, and to
overcome evil with good, to
vanquish hate by love, and to
destroy fear with their
courageous living faith in
truth.*

morning, May 18. In the same section (p. 2057), we can read reference to the forty days of Jesus' morontia career. This story continues onto page 2059. Here the book says that at one o'clock on the same day as the ascension, one hundred and twenty believers were engaged in prayer when the Spirit of Truth was bestowed upon them. This was on the day of Pentecost. At the top of page 2060 we read how the apostles had been in hiding for forty days. This refers to the same period as for Jesus' morontia career.

If we turn back to page 1987, we find that Jesus was brought before Pilate on Friday 7th April, the day before the Jewish Passover. The apostles were in hiding from the afternoon of that day until the morning of the ascension on May 18, about forty full days.

The Jewish Passover is reckoned as occurring on the first new moon after the March Equinox. The ancient Jewish feast of Pentecost is celebrated exactly fifty days later—hence the term Pentecost (from the Greek pentekostos meaning fifty days). So how did a fifty day period in the Jewish calendar become forty days in The Urantia Book?

Easter and Pentecost

Reckoning for both of Christianity's Easter and Pentecost celebrations follows the Jewish tradition. How The Urantia Book acquired this set of errors is close to impossible to conceive. It cannot be a simple type setting error or even an error of copy editing as there are too many actual days and dates given in the text to permit that conclusion.

Why is it so?

I also find it impossible to conceive that the Midwayers of all people, could have made this set of errors. Neither can I understand how the errors were overlooked by the large number of people reputed to have read the Papers during and after their receipt. The fact that Dr Sadler and others knew about the forty day error when the book went to press is discussed in "Notes on the Forty Day Error" an addendum to the article "Forty Days and Forty Nights," both of which appear later in this issue.

At enormous risk to life and limb, I'm forced to speculate that since the presence of the error was known before the printing of the book, correction was probably refused by the revelators. Why? Well, perhaps to discourage attempts to attribute infallibility to the book, something that was already then occurring.

Ken Glasziou

Note: Because of an omission, this and related articles have been available on the Fellowship's web site since April 14. Ed.

References

1. Honderich, T. (Editor) "The Oxford Companion to Philosophy" (Oxford University Press, 1995. Oxford)
2. Rowe, William "The Cosmological Argument" (Princeton, NJ, 1975)

P.S. Fundamentalists: Please spend a little time in prayer, thought, and study before responding.

What I Wish I Had Known at Eighteen.

Sydney Harris, U.S.A.

- That every day marks a fork in the road, in some little way; and that by the time the big fork comes along we have already made so many little decisions that we have no real choice left at the crucial turning.

It is hard to know which horrifies the average person most—to hear religion bitterly maligned, or to see it seriously practiced.

S.J. Harris

What fanatics fail to understand was succinctly expressed by Gracian when he warned: Push righteousness to the extreme and it becomes wrong; press all the juice from an orange and it becomes bitter.

- That it is easier to feel than to think, and easier to feel hate than to feel love, and easier to act on hate than to act on love—and we must resist the easier path every inch of the way every day of our lives.
- That we should be firmly resistant toward ideas we believe to be wrong, but immensely tolerant toward people who hold such ideas, never for a moment confusing the person with the idea, which is the besetting sin of bigotry in all its manifold forms.
- That every time we use a person for our own purpose, ignoring their needs, we diminish ourselves more than we diminish them, for theirs is a wound that could heal, while ours is an amputation that cannot grow back.
- That our differences are superficial, and our similarities are profound; and those who are afraid to acknowledge the similarities are forced to live—and die—by the differences.
- That most of what we call "love" is a form of vanity, and that the genuine thing (far from being as common as grass) is as rare as holiness, or courage, or wisdom, which have a million counterfeits for every one real manifestation.
- That we learn only what becomes part of us; abstract knowledge is not only useless but dangerous until we have assimilated it to the core of our personality.
- That human society is confined in a lifeboat, not dispersed on an ocean liner; and unless each one is permitted the same rights, they will not assume the same responsibilities, and the lifeboat has no chance to survive.
- That "education" is not a formal discipline, but an attitude, an approach, an appetite, an ongoing process that must begin in the home atmosphere if it is to be successfully transmitted to the outer world.
- That the two greatest threats to the security of civilization come from the "absolutists" who

they know precisely what is right and wrong, and from the “relativists” who insist there is no right and wrong—for each doctrine, pushed to its ultimate, leads to death by suffocation or by fragmentation.

Forty Days and Forty Nights

A previous article in this issue discussed the strange and quite astonishing error in Part 4 of The Urantia Book regarding its use of a forty day interval elapsing between the time of Jesus crucifixion on the eve of the Jewish Passover and the time of his ascension on the day appointed for the feast of Pentecost. This ancient Jewish harvest festival came seven weeks and one day after Passover, a fifty day period that derived its name from the Greek word “pentekostos” which means fifty days.

One must be wrong

The Paper provides the date of Passover as April 8 AD 30, and the date for Pentecost as May 18 AD 30, an interval of forty days being the elapsed time between the two dates. At least one of the dates must be wrong, probably the last one as judged from astronomical evidence.

On saying forty but meaning fifty

The dates for the period prior to the crucifixion are well catalogued in the Urantia Paper, as are the day of the week and its actual date for the following period up to and including the day of ascension. There is no way of accounting for the forty day error as due to being a copying, typing, or copy editing error. Neither can the forty day interval be a simple mistake by someone writing forty when they really meant fifty, as it is repeated three times and in a different context for each occasion. The first is in relation to a forty day

Like a dull actor now
I have forgot my part
and I am out,
Even to a full
disgrace.
William Shakespeare

I will have nothing to
do with a man who
can blow hot and cold
with the same breath.
Aesop

interval that Jesus passed with the Morontia Directors (2040), the second refers to Jesus’ morontia career (2057) and the third to the forty days during which the apostles were in hiding after the crucifixion. (2060). And this last reference occurs in the first line under the section heading entitled “The Pentecost Sermon,”—which surely must alert some readers to the occurrence of an inconsistency.

Date for Easter also changes annually

Many Urantia Book readers, with or without a Christian background, would be aware that the Easter holiday period varies each year because it follows the Jewish tradition for Passover which is fixed by the first new moon following the March equinox. In our earlier article, wonderment was expressed about how the error apparently went undetected by those who read the Papers prior to first printing and how the Midwayers responsible for Part 4 could make such an error—if indeed it was an error. An alternative is that the revelators meant to put it there for some logical reason.

Forty days and forty nights in the Bible

An examination of the phrase “forty days” in both the Old and New Testament and even The Urantia Book provides a possible clue. The Bible has twenty two “forty day” references, most being associated with events of significance in Jewish history. These range from the great flood and Noah’s survival, the period of embalming of the body of Jacob (alias Israel) prior to the return of his body to Canaan, the period that Moses spent on the mount when receiving the ten commandments, a period for exploration of the promised land, a period during which the Philistine giant, Goliath, paraded before the Israelites chiding them until slain by David with a stone from his sling. In the New Testament, there was the forty days of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness and the forty days

of his appearances after the resurrection.

It seems highly unlikely that a majority of these periods were exactly forty days. If not then perhaps "forty days" is a symbolic term that was attached to significant events of modest duration in Jewish history. An additional "forty day" interval occurs in The Urantia Book as a kind of rest and resuscitation period following directly after the fusion event for our morontia selves with our Thought Adjuster.

Forty days as a symbol

Did the revelators choose to use an intensely symbolic "forty day" period to describe the interval between Passover and Pentecost, even though it meant that they would introduce error for their dates? If so, were they also drawing attention to their use of symbolism, legend, parable, allegory, mythology, and "what have you" throughout The Urantia Book to describe and illustrate what is essentially a universe frame (1260) in which we can think rationally about our place and purpose in the universe. My personal opinion is that this is exactly what they did. They appear to have attempted to tell us so in the explanation of the mandate, their use of human sources wherever possible, and their description of the Urantia Papers on page 1008.

The "forty day" error is the last, the most obvious, and the most conclusive in the Urantia Papers. It is followed by some of their most magnificent material. It appears to be impossible to assume this particular error is not there for a very good reason.

The sovereignty of free will

We humans are an intractable lot. The revelators were aware that many of the early readers would be so impressed by the receipt of a revelation from a celestial source that, almost certainly, they would be

It is tiresome to keep hearing that the Bible is "the best selling book of all time," as though the fact that many people buy it indicates that they read it, understand it, or follow it.

Sydney Harris

impelled to grant it "divinely dictated" status. But a thorough study of the Papers reveals that such authoritarianism is not the way of our Universal Father. His way is the absolute sovereignty of our free will and the free choice of our ultimate destiny. The revelators may have been attempting to avoid a repetition of the problems that arose through the assignment of divine infallibility to the Bible. Their method of avoidance appears to have been the provision of a universe frame (1260) containing much error but at the same time telling us they were doing precisely that. The "forty day" error was their final attempt to avoid the disaster of a "divine dictation" label. Perhaps also it was the final safeguard.

Hopes of the revelators

One of the hopes of the revelators is expressed in these words:

"You should comprehend that this (Christian) church is only the larval stage of the thwarted spiritual kingdom, which will carry it through this material age and over into a more spiritual dispensation where the Master's teachings may enjoy a fuller opportunity for development. Thus does the so-called Christian church become the cocoon in which the kingdom of Jesus' concept now slumbers. The kingdom of the divine brotherhood is still alive and will eventually and certainly come forth from this long submergence, just as surely as the butterfly eventually emerges as the beautiful unfolding of its less attractive creature of metamorphic development." (1866)

There are other similar expressions of the hope of the revelators that the Urantia Papers would assist to usher in a new era of comprehension of the Master's revelatory life. But The Urantia Book has been afforded an untouchable status among many

*Who overcomes by
force overcomes but
half his foe.*

John Milton

Christians. They want nothing to do with another "divinely-dictated" revelation such as still confronts them with the fundamentalist view of biblical infallibility.

To obtain for the Urantia Papers the attention they so richly merit and to permit them to fulfil the hopes of their revelators, we have to present them in a way that avoids the stigma of "absolute truth," a label the revelators themselves deny. Until this is done, the Papers will continue to remain virtually unread and therefore ineffective.

It is of no help to point to the getting close to one million Urantia Book sales throughout the world. The truth is that most of those books are just as unread as the Bible, a book that claims the record for best seller status for all time.

The Urantia revelation—what was its purpose

Surely the real purpose of the Urantia revelation was always the restoration of the truth of the Fourth Epochal Revelation. All else in the Papers is background to improve the universe frame into which we "fit" the meaning of Jesus' revelation and the purpose of our own lives. Currently Jesus' revelation has been made to "fit" into ancient Jewish aspirations and traditions.

The Papers inform us that Jesus' whole life was a revelation of the nature of God as it is comprehensible to mortal man. In fulfilling his task, Jesus chose to portray the "Father" aspect of the First Source and Center as the archetype of love, compassion, mercy, and righteousness. God, the Father of Jesus, is also the epitome of "good" for only God is good—and so Jesus revealed in his life, the quintessence of "goodness."

A problem we now have is how to restore the real

*Without measureless
and perpetual
uncertainty the drama
of human life would be
destroyed.*

Winston Churchill

*I have been a selfish
being all my life, in
practice, though not in
principle.*

Jane Austen

meaning of the Fourth Epochal Revelation. It should be obvious to all that this cannot be accomplished by force, coercion, or even overpowering intellectual argument. We Urantia Book readers are expected to live the revelation as Jesus lived it. For that, the Papers give us a detailed account of Jesus' life and its meaning—from which we can perceive that we are required to become consciously God-centered in contrast to being both consciously and unconsciously self-centered. Nothing else will do. Nothing else will work.

That so little progress has been made by so many is at least partially due to their being book-centered and mistaking that for the real task. It is just so simple to remain self-centered even while being book-centered. Achieving God-centeredness is a task uniquely individualistic. It would probably be impossible for most of us in the absence of assistance from the Spirit of Truth.

On inner transformation

What is required is an inner transformation and re-centering that involves death of self followed by rebirth. "For whosoever would save his life selfishly, shall lose it, but whosoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's, shall save it. What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The losing of life is metaphorical for an internal process by which we "die to the world and the self" in order to become reborn. The central process of that metaphoric death is our re-centering in God. It is a process that requires faith—a faith defined by:

- A dying to the self as the center of its own concern.
- A dying to the world as the center of security and identity.
- A dying of the self-preoccupied self.

- Rebirth—a birth of a self that is centered in God and in Spirit—and not in worldly aspirations, interests, and expectations.
- A handing over, a surrendering, a letting go, and a radical re-centering in God.

This faith requires that we see at the heart of everything a reality that loves us, a reality that is gracious, merciful, compassionate, and righteous, but a reality whose righteousness is always transcended by mercy. This reality we call God.

If we are to be concerned with leading humanity back to Jesus' Fourth Epochal Revelation then we take on the mighty task appointed to us as possessors of The Urantia Book. We must live, not in imitation of what Jesus said or did or looked like, but in the imitation of his revelation of the nature of God. Only then will the Urantia Papers become truly effective.

Notes on the 40-day error:

Dr Sadler knew about it!

This problem was discussed in correspondence dated March 9, 1959 between Dr Sadler and Dr Earl L. Douglass, whose expertise was biblical studies. It makes it clear that Dr. Sadler and associates were aware of the problem **prior to the book being printed.**

Dr Sadler offers the comment that perhaps the noonday meeting described at the end of Paper 193 was not the same meeting as described at the beginning of Paper 194.

An intensive and detailed examination of the evidence indicates that this cannot be. The number of people is the same—120 believers. Paper 193, concludes with the apostles returning to the upper room about noon having chosen Matthias to replace

Pentecost, the coming of The Spirit of Truth, endowed mortal man with the power to forgive personal injuries, to keep sweet in the midst of the gravest injustice, to remain unmoved in the face of appalling danger, and to challenge the evils of hate and anger by fearless acts of love and forbearance.

*Anyone who isn't
confused here doesn't
really understand
what's going on.*

Anon. (Irish)

Judas. Paper 194 commences with the believers, at about one o'clock becoming aware of a strange presence in the room.

The meeting mentioned in both Papers was between the apostles and the one hundred and twenty foremost disciples in Jerusalem. Included are Jesus' mother and family members.

Dr Sadler's proffered explanation falters in the very first paragraph of Paper 194, Section 1, "The Pentecost Sermon" which reads, "The apostles had been in hiding for forty days." Read in context, it means what it says and not that, "Up until ten days ago, the apostles had been in hiding for forty days"—which is what would be expected if the meeting took place at fifty and not forty days after Jesus' crucifixion (the expectation if the meetings are not the same one).

Further along in this same paragraph, "the frightened apostles emerged from their weeks of seclusion to appear boldly in the temple...." According to Dr Sadler's explanation they must have actually come out of hiding ten days earlier! So why are they still frightened yet no longer in hiding?

The facts given at the end of Paper 193 and the beginning of Paper 194 are a perfect fit if they refer to the same meeting. They are at variance with those facts if we try to make them fit to the "independent meetings" hypothesis.

Why was it not corrected?

Independently of all this, we must ask why the error was not corrected prior to printing. The authors were the midwayers who are located on Urantia. This same group is credited with a major role in the receipt of the Papers because of their ability to penetrate the human mind and to mediate communication via our Thought Adjusters.

There is no reason to believe that the midwayers no longer have this ability. And what about that noble group, the Reserve Corps of Destiny? Why did they not step in to address this disastrous forty day error, or at least mediate an explanation? And in any case, if there is just a modicum of truth in what is supposed to have happened at 533 Diversey Parkway prior to the book's printing, then our celestial supervisors could have found ways to fix the problem.

Meant to be there?

The more we examine the detail of this problem, the more it appears to be that the "forty days" was meant to be there.

Curiously, it has lain dormant for all these years but now pops up independently in several places. One is a recent article by Seppo Kanerva in the IUA Journal, another is in E-mail discussions between various fundamentalist readers and our editors—and probably there are others. Is it a signal that the time for radical change in the Urantia movement has now arrived?

In closing, and just in case any fundamentalist manages to find a way to call black white, we'll leave them with another task. Take a trip to the hill top at Nazareth, face due east, and see if you can see the rocky hills of Moab far to the east beyond the Jordan valley. (1363) [Note: Because of an omission, these articles have been available on the Fellowship's web site since April 14.]

Our Problem

Matter knows not truth

The inclusion of a now outdated cosmology, and of allegory and myth, in the Urantia Papers in no way detracts from their value as religious revelation. For many of us, this knowledge frees the revelation from entanglement with things both material and social,

*The remarkable thing
about the human
mind is the range of
its limitations.*

Celia Green

*The crime is not to
avoid failure. The
crime is not to give
triumph a chance.*

H. Wheldon

leaving it to deal with what really matters—the revelation of our "divine and eternal destiny," the confirmation of our universal brotherhood, the validation of the reality of a God whose nature is love, mercy, and compassion, and who, in spirit form, deigns to dwell within us.

True revelation has no function in the sorting of the supposedly material facts of science, history, or even philosophy. These are man-made fields for investigation. Revelation is a sorting process in which the truths of spirit acquirement are sifted from the accumulated errors of evolutionary religion (see p. 1110). Revealed religion is a spirit derivative that deals exclusively with that which has spiritual value.

This view of the content of the Urantia Papers encourages us to differentiate between what is given to us as background information upon which to structure a personal universe frame relating ourselves to our reality, and that which is provided for the enhancing of our spiritual progress. But we must be continually aware that our universe frame is unavoidably erroneous. (1260)

When assuming that the whole of The Urantia Book is divinely sanctioned revelation, readers place themselves in a similar position to those biblical fundamentalists who fail to differentiate between the word of God and the words of men. With this kind of fundamentalist attitude, there is no valid way to apportion relative value, for who would dare judge themselves worthy to adjudicate on the divine word?

All revelation is partial, transient, adapted

The Urantia Papers protect us from this conundrum. The revelators themselves inform us that what they have provided is not divine revelation (absolute truth), and that its cosmology (background knowledge) would soon need replacement.

"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 in 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." (1008)

A time to think!

In the light of these words from the revelators, surely it is time to rethink attitudes, purposes, and goals. What can now be done that will enhance the acceptability of the Urantia Papers to the world in general but particularly to the Christian church where the message of the Fourth Epochal revelation lies confused and partially dormant? The hopes of the revelators are expressed by:

"The time is ripe to witness the figurative resurrection of the human Jesus from his burial tomb amidst the theological traditions and the religious dogmas of nineteen centuries. Jesus of Nazareth must not be longer sacrificed to even the splendid concept of the glorified Christ. What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!"

There are several such comments scattered through the pages of the Papers that indicate the enlightenment of the Christian Church was a primary purpose for the Papers.

The theological institutions responsible for the

*What is now most needed
is Jesus. The world needs
to see Jesus living again
on earth in the experience
of spirit-born mortals who
effectively reveal the
Master to all men.*

(2084)

*The religious challenge of this
age is to those farseeing and
forward-looking men and
women of spiritual insight who
will dare to construct a new
and appealing philosophy of
living out of the enlarged and
exquisitely integrated modern
concepts of cosmic truth,
universe beauty, and divine
goodness. (43)*

teaching of biblical scholarship to those entering the ministry of mainstream churches in the U.S.A. have been struggling even before the turn of this century to modify the popular image of Jesus which they accept is seriously misleading.¹

Despite the efforts of scholars and teachers, little progress has been made with church congregations in updating attitudes to scripture. The Urantia Papers may have been of inestimable assistance in this task if they had not been not presented as another infallible revelation. At least the Papers may then have been acceptable reading, but unfortunately opposition grew quickly and they were labeled as gnostic, of no consequence, or not worth reading.

What can Urantians contribute?

A possible way to change the current situation may be a new printing with an introduction to the book that would explain what the revelators themselves have stated about the Papers. Such an introduction would need to be forceful enough to overcome the stigma already earned by previous attitudes. And if it merely stimulated enough interest to induce reading the story of Jesus and other key Papers such as those on the nature of God and the role of the Thought Adjusters, the revelation might begin to have the effect for which its authors appear to have hoped.

It appears possible that this kind of approach might, in the short term, result in decreased sales of the book. A warning of this possibility is given in the quotation used from p. 1008. Obviously the revelators are not so much concerned with book sales as with the good the revelation might achieve.

While a decrease in general sales may initially occur, the real hope is that there would be an increase in interest from theologians, philosophers, scientists,

and academia in general. There are many Papers in the book that are absolutely outstanding in content and quality that could not fail to impress the minds of all but the most prejudiced and conservative. The approval of this group must ultimately bring feedback to a much wider group.

What else is there?

Another alternative is secondary works. Because of preceding events in the Urantia movement, secondary works might now be the only realistic option. Here the principal problem will not be so much the writing of these works for there are many talented writers among the readership. The major problem will be distribution for, without the backing of a major publishing house, the present system of book distribution virtually excludes the works of little known authors. This is a serious difficulty that would need addressing. Perhaps the potential may be with the CDROM and copious advertising.

Reference

1. Borg, Marcus, "Jesus: A New Vision." (Harper, San Francisco, 1991) See "Introduction" and page 17, ref. 5.

Cosmic Reflections

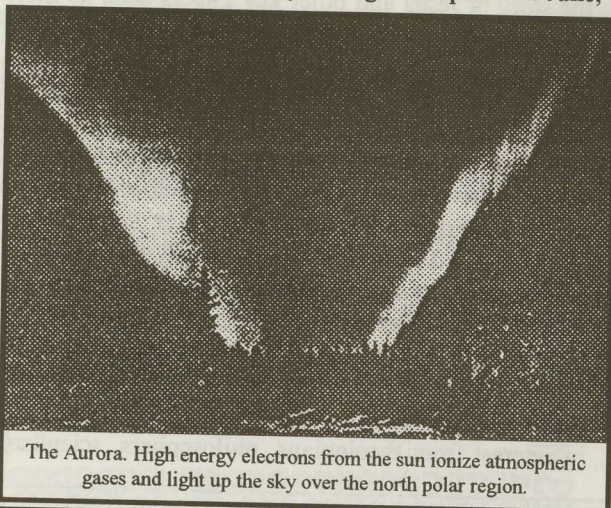
What's at the Center of the Earth?

communicated by Paul Jaworski, South Australia

Earth's center revealed.

"Inside a liquid core, the center of the Earth is solid, scientists yesterday told a meeting of the American Geophysical Union.

"The long-sought finding, which had been hinted at but never proven, came from an analysis of seismic waves generated by a very strong earthquake in June,



Religion is the spiritual
rhythm of the soul in
time-space harmony
with the higher and
eternal melody
measurements of
Infinity. (2080)

1996, about 600 km below Indonesia.

"Professor Emile Okal, from California's Northwestern University, and an author of the study, said scientists had known for some time that Earth was composed of a rocky mantle floating on a liquid core of molten iron.

"But geophysicists also speculated that at some greater depth, the pressure would be so high the iron would become solid."

Referring to the Earth's center, The Urantia Book says:

"The continental land drift continued. The earth's core had become as dense and rigid as steel, being subjected to a pressure of almost 25,000 tons to the square inch, and owing to the enormous gravity pressure, it was and still is very hot in the deep interior. The temperature increases from the surface downward until at the center it is slightly above the surface temperature of the sun." (668)

Emiliani (1995) describes the inner core of earth as being solid and surrounded by an outer core that is liquid. The composition of the core is given as 90% iron, 9% nickel, and 1% sulfur, the pressure at the center as 24,300 tons per square inch, and its temperature as 6000° C. The surface of the sun's photosphere is given as 5,500 degrees C and the junction of the photosphere and the convective layer is at 7,700 degrees C.

Judged by the report at the meeting of the American Geophysical Union, there must have been at least some uncertainty about the solid nature of the core that is not mentioned in our reference work.

Matthew Block considers that Reginald A. Daly's

book, "Our Mobile Earth" (1926) was one source for this section of The Urantia Book. Daly estimated the pressure at the core as about 22,000 tons per sq. inch and its temperature as surpassing the surface temperature of the sun, about 6000 degrees centigrade. Daly also stated the core is composed of metallic iron alloyed with a small proportion of nickel and other metals. The Urantia Book mentions that iron and other heavy metals gravitate to the center of the planet. (658)

Reference

Emiliani, C. "Exploring the Physical World with Facts, Figures, and Formulas." (Wiley, 1995)

Did you know?

Most of the basic particles of sub-atomic physics have at least two modes of spin. Looking in their direction of travel, the spin of a particle can be either to the left or to the right. The exception is the neutrino, the tiny particles devoid of electrical potential referred to in the Urantia Papers that escape from a collapsing star (464). Neutrinos spin only to the left—and nobody knows why this is so.

Black holes are thermodynamic systems having both temperature and entropy. Entropy, besides being the measure of disorganization, is also the measure of information of a system. What is remarkable about a black hole is that its entropy is proportional to the area of its event horizon, the latter being the boundary of no-escape. Jacob Beckenstein discovered that there is a limit to the amount of information that may be contained inside a given region of space. Guess what? The limit is given by the entropy of the largest black hole that would fit into the region.

If you think that is a pretty useless piece of information, think again. A basic principle of

*The majority of
professed Christians of
Western civilization are
unwittingly actual
secularists. (2081)*

*Judged in the light of their
Internet altercations, the
majority of professed
Urantia Book followers who
participate are also
unwittingly actual
secularists.*

(ref. 2081)

modern physics is that the world is made up of fields. A field is something that can vary independently at the different points of space. Whether described by classical or quantum physics, a field can thus contain an infinite amount of information. But Beckenstein's discovery was that no space can contain an infinite amount of information.

Physics still has a long way to go to come up with a theory of everything. One need is to unify the large and the small, general relativity and quantum theory. One point of divergence is time. Relativity treats time as relational, determined from within the universe whereas quantum theory has it as absolute and determined from outside the system being studied. To find a solution has proved to be extremely difficult. One of the possibilities (that would seem to also cope with the problem of fields and the Beckenstein boundary) would be to have both space and time quantized—that is there would be a smallest possible unit of length and a smallest possible interval of time.

For reasons we do not have the space to go into, many physicists hope for a unified cosmological theory that would be relational and fully defined from within the system, in this case the whole universe. Such a theory needs to be able to explain a universe that is complex, probabilistic, and self-organizing.

Whether or not it is possible to explain our universe entirely from within the system is conjectural. Probably not, as the Urantia Papers indicate that the creation and control of energy flow emanates from outside the system—but is also under intelligent control from within the universe. It appears to be highly unlikely that such a system can ever be described satisfactorily solely from within, and certainly not for a universe treated as a closed system.

Reference

Smolin, L. "The Life of the Cosmos." (Oxford University Press, 1997)

Antigravity is Back.

Do you have trouble imagining the four dimensional universe of relativity? Then imagine the difficulty faced by the Urantia Book revelators in conveying to us a mental concept of a seven dimensional universe. (1439) This problem was highlighted by Australian reader, Nigel Nunn, who comments that the torus-like description given us for the Master Universe must be some kind of geometrical projection or representation as seen from a higher dimension rather than being reality.

The revelators also speak of antigravity as a means by which the Power Directors control energy and mass distribution. But for a considerable period the concept of antigravity had no place among our physicists and cosmologists.

Observed from within, our universe is expanding, and is either flat, open, or closed. If open, it expands forever, if closed, it ultimately collapses—and flat is in between. Flat is the favorite, but cosmologists have exhausted all the possibilities they can think up to balance the mass-energy density budget required for flatness.

At one time it seemed that vacuum energy could do

the trick. This comes from virtual particles popping in and out of reality—and can actually be measured and shown to agree with quantum theory to an accuracy of nine decimal places. But things went wrong when vacuum energy was used to make up for the missing mass of the cosmologists, being a mere 120 orders of magnitude too large!!

With all possibilities apparently exhausted, what was left was either an open universe or one filled with energy of an unknown kind in order to produce flatness.

To make the latter work, we have a re-introduction of Einstein's long abandoned cosmological constant, which acts to oppose the effect of gravity with a repulsive rather than an attractive force, antigravity. Sounds simple enough, but it now has to be tuned to an accuracy of 123 decimal places—124 will not do. So no wonder that Einstein was pleased to let it go.

Among other things the book tells us that, "antigravity is a power of the Infinite Spirit....It can annul gravity within a local frame. It does so by the exercise of equal force presence. It operates only with reference to material gravity, and it is not the action of mind." (101) I wonder who has the task of balancing it to the 123rd decimal place?

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