

WHO WROTE THE URANTIA BOOK

A Commentary

The Fellowship for Readers of The Urantia Book

The question most frequently asked by people who have discovered The Urantia Book is, "Would you tell me something about the origin of the book?" This general question is usually followed by a number of more specific inquiries. Such interest in the origin of a book as stimulating and challenging as The Urantia Book is natural. We have been conditioned by our culture to depend on sources and authority in evaluating publications of all kinds. This is especially true of religion.

Usually only a combination of tradition, social acceptance, and a firsthand knowledge of its quality will give the average person a satisfying answer concerning the origins of revelatory literature. Although Biblical scholars have declared that our knowledge of original New Testament documents is so meagre, "we can now know nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus," most of us are not disturbed about the origin or historicity of the New Testament. The experience of centuries has validated its quality.

At this point in time there is no similar tradition of acceptance to give a "satisfying" answer to the origin of The Urantia Book; someday, as its impact on civilization grows, there will be. Now the book must be evaluated solely on the basis of its quality -- a personal experience of its internal authenticity or lack of it. The Urantia Book message must be experienced before one can evaluate its quality and consider the probability of the revelatory nature of its origin. Before you have completely read The Urantia Book, therefore, it is impossible to give you a very satisfying answer concerning its origin; and, after you have read the book, someone else's comment about its origin, while of interest, is of secondary importance.

This problem of new readers, nevertheless, should not be ignored or answered in a cursory manner. Just as one who has experienced being in love can give an uninitiated friend some idea of this exalted state, so will we endeavor to share with you concerning the origin of The Urantia Book. We well know, however, that this second-hand knowledge has severe limitations in the authentication process and only a firsthand experience of the quality of the book can give an adequate answer to the question of origin.

First of all, let us acknowledge that no human being knows many of the details and specifics regarding the origin of The Urantia Papers. The most accurate information about the origin of the book is given by the revelators themselves. They candidly admit it is virtually impossible to translate the concepts of divinity and eternity into the circumscribed language and finite concepts of humanity (page 17).

Those who bring the enlarged truths of revelation are further handicapped by the rigorous universe restrictions regarding imparting unearned knowledge. They are not allowed to anticipate scientific discoveries of the future (page 1109). To communicate effectively the revelators also must present teachings which are not too far removed from the thoughts and reactions of the age in which they are presented (page 1007).

They realize we human beings like to progress from the simple to the complex, but they know that spiritual wisdom is achieved only in a holistic setting, the understanding of the origin, history, and destiny of universe realities (page 215). To compensate for these handicaps and limitations in communication, the revelators have used thousands of carefully selected human concepts to help them convey their message in our frames of reference (page 17, page 1343).

The actual composition of The Urantia Papers was assigned to three special commissions of universe personalities. Part I was formulated by a high commission of twenty-four Orvonton (superuniverse) administrators headed by a Divine Counsellor and was presented in 1934. Parts II and III were authorized by a Nebadon (local universe) commission of twelve, acting under the direction of Mantutia

Melchizedek and were indited in 1934 and 1935. Part IV was sponsored by a commission of twelve Urantia midwayers acting under the supervision of a Melchizedek revelatory director.

After formulating a message designed to accomplish its divine purpose on our planet, the next major task was to select a way to bridge communication between the spiritual levels of the universe and material mortals on our planet. Necessary preparations for presenting The Urantia Papers to us were carried out by primary and secondary midwayers (beings quite close to us who can operate in both the spiritual and material worlds). It should be made clear, however, that the midway creatures are not involved in phenomena related to "spiritualism" or "mediumship" and they do not, ordinarily, permit humans to witness their contact with the material world (page 865).

Preparatory conditions were completed for presenting The Urantia Papers by making contact with a highly experienced and versatile Thought Adjuster of a human being on our world. It was through these cosmic adjustments that The Urantia Papers were materialized in the English language (page 1208-1209, page 1258).

Just what secondary midwayers did to materialize the papers we do not know. These details, no doubt, were wisely not given to us. The communication of spiritual truth is the main purpose of revelation and the spiritual beings who present revelation are wise enough not to get sidetracked by our natural human curiosity about associated phenomena which is beyond our current scientific knowledge. The revelators simply say on page 648: "We indited these narratives and put them in the English language, by a technique authorized by our superiors . . ." They do not explain the details of this technique. We assume that in our ascent in the universe we will someday know something of the nature of this revelatory methodology. As for now, it is a "masterful mystery." (page 966)

Who the human being was whose versatile Thought Adjuster aided in bringing the fifth epochal revelation to our world will never be known because the revelators asked the few people who knew to take a pledge of secrecy. They did not want any human beings to be mystically associated with The Urantia Book. It is amazing that the authors of The Urantia Papers tell us as much as they do. Upon reflection, you will recognize the persistent questions about the unrevealed "details" concerning the origin of the book as a psychological parallel to the recurring demand put to Jesus, "Show us a sign."

Now let us turn to the human side of the story which may be interesting, but has no spiritual significance. In preparation for presenting the papers of the fifth epochal revelation and placing them in the custody of a responsible group of human beings, the revelators made contact with a small group of people in Chicago. The leaders of this group were asked by the revelators not only to refrain from revealing the identity of the individual associated with the presentation of the papers, but also not to discuss details related to the arrival of the papers. We will, therefore, never know just where or how the papers were received. Even these early leaders were puzzled; no human being knows just how this materialization was executed. The reason given for this request of secrecy is that the revelators are determined that future generations shall have The Urantia Book wholly free from mortal connections. Human beings are often more concerned with unusual phenomena than spiritual reality. Since there are no "miraculous events" connected with human beings associated with the origin of the book, hopefully, future generations will be free from preoccupation with myths about it so that the message of The Urantia Book can shine in all its brilliance. The revelators want the fifth epochal revelation to stand on its own declarations and teachings. In spite of this care of the revelators to give us The Urantia Book unencumbered by the "egg shells" of its arrival, already there are dozens of strange apocryphal stories about its origin.

The account of the origin of The Urantia Book, as we pointed out earlier, is not spiritually satisfying. Only a firsthand experience of the superlative message of the book can confirm the spiritual source of its origin. In reality, information about its origin has nothing to do with the truth or spiritual quality of the book. This must be judged by the reader on the basis of the content of the book. The message of The Urantia Book has amazing self-authentication. The indwelling spirit in us affirms the everlasting truth of its message.

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