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The Urantia Book Has a Divine Message for All of Us on Urantia! (Or Does It?)

By Tal Davis

Years ago when I was young pastor in south Florida, I discovered that several women in my congregation were studying a large strange looking book. I asked them about it and one of them sort of reluctantly told me it was *The Urantia Book*. She said it helped her better understand things in the Bible. I asked her where she got it. She said she had gotten it from a friend in a town she lived in before. At that point I did some research about the book and, needless to say, was shocked to find out what the women were getting into in my own congregation. I tried to warn them about what I learned, but I think they thought I was just over reacting. Anyway, they never talked to me about it again. I think they just kept on studying it. In this article, I want to take look at the book and see why I was, and still remain, concerned about anyone, especially a Christian, diving into the unholy waters of *The Urantia Book*.

“Urantia, what’s that?” You ask. Well, I will tell you. But first, let’s review a few facts of literary religious history. We all know that over the centuries men and women have claimed to be divinely appointed prophets or apostles of God or gods. They have written literally dozens of books that they claim to be new inspired revelations from God or the gods. Let’s look at a few of them.

Most of you are probably familiar with Muhammed (c. A.D. 570 - A.D. 632) who claimed to be the final prophet of Allah (God). He dictated the *Qur’an* in Arabic beginning about A.D. 610 when he said he was visited by the angel Gabriel who transmitted the words from Allah. From that beginning sprang the worldwide religion of Islam. That counterfeit of Judaism and Christianity today claims over two billion adherents around the world who regard the *Qur’an* as the final and greatest of all divine revelations.

Possibly, but less likely, you have also heard of the Swedish genius named Emanuel Swedenborg (1688 - 1772). Young Swedenborg was a brilliant mathematician, engineer, scientist, and inventor. However, beginning in 1741, when he was 53 years old, he claimed to begin experiencing a number of heavenly visions. These revelations convinced him that Christianity, after the apostolic age, had been corrupted. He then wrote 18 books based on his visions and literal visits to heaven and hell that he said would restore true Christianity. His books included *The True Christian Religion*, *The Heavenly Arcana*, and *Heaven and Hell*, which are regard as divinely inspired by the General Church of the New Jerusalem and other Swedenborgian cults.

Another, better known, American who claimed to be a “Latter-day” prophet was Joseph Smith, Junior (1805 - 1844). You probably know something of the story of young Joseph’s claim to have had a vision in 1820 of Jesus Christ and The Heavenly Father. According to Joseph’s story, they told him that all Christian churches were in error and that they would use him to restore the true church to the earth. In doing so, Smith recovered, in New York, a set of golden plates upon which were written scriptures he later miraculously translated and published as *The Book of Mormon* in 1830. That same year, he founded his “Restored Church of Christ” in New York (later changed to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [LDS]). Until his violent death in 1844, Smith received other revelations besides the *Book of Mormon*. Eventually they were published by the LDS as *The Pearl of Great Price* and the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Those three books, along with the King James Version of the Bible, are today regarded as divinely inspired scriptures by

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS/Mormons).

Another cult leader whose followers regard her writings as divinely enlightened expositions of the Bible was Mary Baker Eddy (1821 - 1910). Her book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (or simply *Science and Health*), is a strange allegorical and metaphysical interpretation of Scripture. She takes words completely out of context in the Bible and gives them totally unjustified mystical definitions. She founded the First Church of Christ Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1879. Today, *Science and Health* is still used by followers of Christian Science as the only valid commentary for understanding the underlying true meaning of the Bible.

There is one other, more contemporary, personality whose followers believed (and thousands still believe) discovered the answers to all of life's issues. His vast library of complex writings and lectures are put on a level of near divine illumination by his living disciples. Some of his followers are well-known Hollywood movie stars and musicians. That self-proclaimed world explorer and mental health genius was L. Ron Hubbard (1911 - 1986). He was the creative mind behind the mental pseudo-science of Dianetics, and founded of the Church of Scientology in 1954. His best-known books included *Dianetics - The Modern Science of Mental Health* (1950), *Scientology: The Fundamentals of Thought* (1988), and *The Way to Happiness* (1981).

We could continue to expound about many other cults and sects that have extra-biblical scriptures. They include: The Way International; The Family International/Children of God; Jehovah's Witnesses; Baha'i Faith; the Unification Church; and Sikhism. You can find information about these and many more in our book: *Understanding the Truth Mirage: A Worldview Encyclopedia*.

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So what has all that got to do with Urantia? Just that another volume has been added to the already crowded library of modern false Scriptures. It is called *The Urantia Book* (sometimes called *The Urantia Papers* or *The Fifth Epochal Revelation*). It is published by The Urantia Foundation of Chicago, Illinois, for The Urantia Book Fellowship (UBF). The UBF is a tax-empt educational foundation operating under a declaration of trust. It has a five member board of trustees who serve without pay for life. Its original stated purpose was to "preserve the text of *The Urantia Book* and to retain absolute and unconditional control" of its printing, reproduction, and translation. In 1955 the Urantia Foundation took ownership of *The Urantia Book* copyright. In 1971 it registered its concentric circles logo as an exclusive trademark. However, the *The Urantia Book* copyright has expired and the English version is now in the public domain. Nonetheless, the foundation's trademark has not expired and will not. So only those editions published bearing that foundation's TM are authorized by the Urantia Foundation. It still holds copyrights on most foreign language editions.

Another organization associated with the Urantia Foundation is the Urantia Association International (UAI), also headquartered in Chicago. The UAI's primary purpose is to promote study of *The Urantia Book* and its teachings. It encourages the formation of study groups in various locations around the world. These study groups eventually form into autonomous Urantia associations. Students of *The Urantia Book*, and those in UAI study groups, are supposedly not required to give up membership in their own faiths.

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So that brings us the next big question. Just who wrote *The Urantia Book*? First of all, the book is 2,097 pages in a large size volume. It consists of 196 papers and is divided into four major parts entitled:

1. The Central and Superuniverses,
2. The Local Universe,
3. The History of Urantia, and
4. The Life and Teachings of Jesus.

The alleged “authors” of these papers refer to themselves by their order of being with such glorious titles as Divine Counselor, Perfector of Wisdom, Brilliant Evening Star, and Chief of Seraphim. Believers in *The Urantia Book* are convinced it was not written by a human author or authors.

Martin Gardner, a professional skeptic of all supernatural occurrences, wrote a book, *Urantia: The Great Cult Mystery*. Cult Researcher Eric Pement wrote a review of Gardner’s book that summarized his findings. Gardner stated that the *Urantia Book*’s defenders purport that its was written by “supermortal, celestial beings through an unnamed ‘human subject’ who conveyed messages from them in his sleep.” He says a Chicago psychiatrist named Dr. William Sadler (1875-1969) listened to the person as he or she received the messages and wrote them down. Sadler never revealed the name of the individual through whom the supermortals communicated, but in 1923 he assembled a select group to study the messages with him.

The celestial entities described themselves as aliens from other planets, and that their name for planet Earth is Urantia. They claimed to have been observing and involving themselves in Earth’s evolution and history for centuries. They complained that Christians had corrupted the truth about who Jesus Christ really was and what He taught. They were now going to reveal the truth through the *Urantia Papers*, as *The Urantia Book* was first called. Eventually Sadler and his followers became convinced that the

Urantia Papers were an authentic divine revelation. The first edition was published in 1955. Apparently, Sadler never revealed the name of the so-called “human subject.” (Eric Pement - Review of *Urantia: The Great Cult Mystery* by Martin Gardner [Prometheus Books, 1995]. Review originally published in the *Christian Research Journal*, June 10, 2009; Updated: August 6, 2026).

So who did write the book? Of course, we agree with Gardner that it was not extraterrestrial beings mentally transmitting it telepathically to some sleeping person. A number of researchers have speculated, with good evidence, that the author was probably William Sadler himself and a small group called the Contact Commission. The supposed “sleeping subject,” according to Martin Gardner, was quite likely a man named Wilfred Custer Kellogg who lived with the Sadlers in Chicago. He was the nephew of W. K. Kellogg, the Battle Creek, Michigan, cornflake king. Both Sadler and Wilfred C. Kellogg had been Seventh-day Adventists (as was W. K. Kellogg). This is significant because some of the material in *The Urantia Book* reflects the influence of SDA theology. Two examples are the identification of Michael the Archangel with Jesus Christ, and the belief in soul-sleep for dead in the interim until the resurrection.

Another *Urantia* researcher, Earnest Moyer, showed that Sadler made corrections to the text of *The Urantia Book*. Some of them done even after its first printing was supposedly finished and declared perfect. He points out two examples. One correction was that the first edition reported Jesus speaking to “the twelve apostles” in the Upper Room after the Last Supper, even though Judas had already left. Later editions just said he spoke only to “the apostles.” The other correction is that the first edition said the wise-men from the east visited the baby Jesus “in the manger.” In later printings,

that problematic phrase was removed for obvious reasons. (Cited by Dr. Michael Gleghorn: *The Urantia Book - A Biblical Worldview Perspective*. In Probe for Answers. May 2004, <https://probe.org/the-urantia-book/>)

Because of these textual mistakes and other evidence of plagiarism. Michael Gleghorn makes this conclusion: “Wherever the information in *The Urantia Book* has come from – whether extra-planetary personalities, human beings, demonic spirits, or some combination of these – the source of this information is not entirely trustworthy. Moreover, it is not entirely biblical either.” It would seem the best evidence is that William Sadler himself, with some help by Wilfred Custer Kellogg, was the primary author of *The Urantia Book*.

Now we come to question of how *The Urantia Book* compares to historic Christianity. According to researcher Dr. Michael Gleghorn of Probe Ministries, *The Urantia Book* contradicts basic Christian teachings on many fronts. “If we compare the teachings of *The Urantia Book* with those of the Bible, we quickly discover that *The Urantia Book*, far from being consistent with biblical Christianity, actually denies or distorts almost every fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith.” (Dr. Michael Gleghorn: *The Urantia Book - A Biblical Worldview Perspective*. In Probe for Answers. May 2004, <https://probe.org/the-urantia-book/>). He states that *The Urantia Book* espouses a form of polytheism using the term “Gods” (capitalized G) many times. It rejects the virgin birth of Christ but maintains He was the the incarnation of Michael of Nebadon, the creator of our universe and one of “more than 700,000 Creator Sons of the Eternal Son.”

Furthermore, *The Urantia Book* essentially denies the fall of mankind into sin. Therefore, there is no need for a substitutionary atonement. Neither does *The Urantia Book* teach the existence of eternal hell, but warns of total annihilation for those who refuse to repent from evil. This is another doctrine borrowed from Seventh-day Adventism.

So you can see why I was so alarmed when women in my church were studying *The Urantia Book*. It is, like many other cult texts, another counterfeit gospel that leads its readers from biblical truth into spiritual confusion and darkness. I recommend to any Christian to avoid reading it and if asked about it to sound an alarm, unless you are doing an actual worldview study on this false religion. The only help they need is the Word of God, the Bible, and the Teacher, the Holy Spirit. But first of all, they need to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

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