

THE URANTIA BOOK:
LEAVENING
OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE
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One of the greatest needs of contemporary society is to be inspired by a fresh and enlarged spiritual vision that will stimulate humankind to new spiritual growth. Such advances in spiritual enlightenment in the past have been initiated by pioneering personalities or were inspired by the vision of prophetic books.

It is my considered opinion, confirmed by more than forty years of critical thought and experience, that we have in *The Urantia Book* such an epoch-making book. Like a mountain peak rising above the slumbering potentials of our contemporary scene, the book catches and reflects the light that signals the dawn of a new spiritual era. It is destined to introduce unprecedented creative thought and action in the field of religion that will transform our entire society.

The Urantia Book purports to be the Fifth Epochal Revelation, the first major divine revelation since the coming of Christ Jesus to our planet. Such a claim surely will put a knowledgeable and responsible person on guard. Almost every generation produces a number of people who pose as the bearers of a “new revelation.” What is surprising about *The Urantia Book* is that it has almost nothing in common with radical and fanatical movements. It does not advocate a new religion. Its viewpoint builds upon the religious heritage of the past and present; yet, it is fresh, expansive, and profound.

The superior quality of the philosophical-religious insights of *The Urantia Book* is clear to anyone of discriminating mind who reads it. After a judicious and reflective reading of the book, one is impressed by the power of its own authenticity. It is a book, however, which cannot be adequately evaluated until one grasps its comprehensive universe cosmology—its total religious picture. Just as students of the life of Jesus recognize the superlative quality of his character even though they may reject his divinity, so humankind will eventually recognize the unparalleled quality of the insights of *The Urantia Book*—even though they may not accept as a new revelation.

Revelatory authenticity, however, is a secondary consideration. The basic challenge posed by this stimulating book is pragmatic. Does it have something creative and constructive to contribute to our modern religious-philosophic outlook? There is little question but that it can and will make a significant contribution to our religious thinking. Evaluated on the basis of spiritual insight, philosophic coherence, and reality-centeredness, it presents the finest world view of religion and spiritual reality available to our contemporary society. It will profoundly impress those who are interested in progressive philosophical and religious thinking that has the potential of molding world destiny.

A HOLISTIC PHILOSOPHICAL ORIENTATION

The exceptional philosophical-religious qualities of *The Urantia Book* include an integrated and masterful concept of reality. The gap between monistic and pluralistic metaphysical concepts is bridged. Mechanistic and vitalistic interpretations of natural phenomena are integrated. Science and religion are seen as aspects of a larger unity. Concepts of deity ranging from that of a personal Universal Father to an impersonal absolute are so well unified that the holistic picture is harmonious. Both unitarian and trinitarian views are enhanced. These and other philosophical-religious diversities are integrated in such a way as to augment the essential truths in each of these positions.

A marvelously organized astronomical universe is projected which includes millions of inhabited planets in all stages of physical, mental, and spiritual evolution. The book contains what is probably the most realistic and inclusive material-mindal-spiritual cosmology in the entire field of philosophy and religion.

Moreover, *The Urantia Book* presents an eminently reasonable picture of the conditions and nature of immortality. Survival is seen as dependent on the spiritual reality status of the individual—the result of the free choice motivation and decisions of the person toward truth, beauty, and goodness (God) as he or she sincerely understands these values. Nevertheless, evil, sin, and judgment are stern and sober realities in the universe. The interrelationships of body, mind, soul, and spirit are treated with much insight and originality. The central challenge to each person is to make a balanced effort to achieve God-consciousness. Growth toward spiritual perfection is presented as the fundamental motivation of life. This growth is evolutionary, culminating, and virtually endless.

The Urantia Book also presents a superior understanding of planetary history, dynamics, and destiny. Evolution is seen as the key *modus operandi* of our planet. It integrates the mechanisms of the physical universe with the purposes of mind and spirit “over-control.” An excellent summary of the development of religion and the growth of civilization is given with admirable conciseness and insight. The book’s penetrating analysis of religion, culture, and the family is of exceptional quality. Its basic philosophy of the various forms of energy is that matter is ultimately subject to mind, and that mind is eventually controlled by spirit.

The last section of *The Urantia Book* contains an extended version of the life and teachings of Jesus which is unsurpassed in theistic philosophical reasonableness, spiritual insight, and personality appeal. This superb presentation of the life and teaching of Jesus brings life to the sketchy New Testament story and with it a new authenticity. It is basically acceptable to all religions, emphasizing the religion *of* Jesus which is unifying as opposed to the religion *about* Jesus which tends to be divisive.

A RESOURCE NOT AN IMPERATIVE

Although the message of *The Urantia Book* is solidly rooted in the perennial philosophy and experience of the past, it does present an enlarged view of the universe and God. Religious institutions usually find expanded knowledge and insight difficult to assimilate. Light can blind as well as guide. Truth which is presented prematurely brings frustration and rejection. *The Urantia Book*, therefore, may be disturbing to some people even though it is supportive and positive toward all people and all human efforts in the search for truth and spiritual understanding.

People are receptive to progressive spiritual values long before they are prepared to understand the origin and implications of these truths. Religious leaders, therefore, might best stimulate spiritual growth by translating the insights they discover in *The Urantia Book* into the idiom and reference frame of the people they serve. Many of us have already learned how to do this in transcribing religious and spiritual insights acquired in seminary and further graduate study to the person in the pew.

Even though *The Urantia Book* is among the most significant sources of spiritual guidance available to contemporary society, it is not an end in itself; nor is it a necessary means of spiritual enlightenment. Its potentials for individual and social growth, however, are so great it should be highly recommended to all who are interested in the creative possibilities of a spiritual renaissance in our society. Its message is balanced and profound. Its approach is open and benign. There are no threats or coercions to “believe.” It seeks to work in and through the evolutionary process and within the social institutions of our world.

During the years since its initial publication in 1955, this 2000-plus page book is being discovered by steadily increasing numbers of people. The overwhelming consensus among those who have read *The Urantia Book* is that it is destined for universal recognition on our planet.

The kingdom or family of God that was the focus of the teachings of Jesus is an invisible and spiritual fellowship that is destined to become a living organism transcending social institutions. Contemporary religious institutions serve as useful sources of religious ministration in our society. No doubt other religious groups will originate from the inspiration of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. The teachings of *The Urantia Book* are destined to support, enlighten, and strengthen all religious institutions toward the fulfillment of their unique potentials in ministering to the spiritual needs of humankind. In the ages to come it will serve as an ecumenical leavening influence to the great and many-faceted religious heritage of our world.