

LINK SIX

KEY LETTERS

"A Friendly Church in a Friendly City"

Trinity Presbyterian Church

3261 TWENTY-THIRD STREET
TEL. MISSION 7-5156
SAN FRANCISCO 10, CALIFORNIA

March 9, 1959

Dr. William S. Sadler, Sr.
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago 14
Ill.

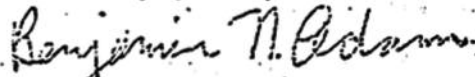
Dear Dr. Sadler,

My last letter was written to you on Feb. 24, 1955 -- over five years ago. At that time you did me the honor of answering my letter some four days later. I was one of the pre-publication subscribers to the Urantia Book and received two copies of it when it came off the press in October of 1955.

Since receiving the book I have read it through and have studied many parts of it over and over. I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have just written to Dr. Earl L. Douglass whom you recently met. In it I have outlined some of my conclusions.

Would you be so kind as to let me know what other critical examinations of the book may have been made by specialists in other fields such as physics, astronomy, etc.

Very sincerely yours,



Benjamin N. Adams

"A Friendly Church in a Friendly City"

Trinity Presbyterian Church

3261 TWENTY-THIRD STREET
TEL. MISSION 7-5156
SAN FRANCISCO 10, CALIFORNIA
March 9, 1959

Dr. Earl L. Douglass
C/o The Hilton Hotel
Los Angeles
Calif.

Dear Earl,

Your letter of March 1 has just come. I share your disappointment that Los Angeles is not closer to San Francisco.

Was interested to hear of your visit with Dr. Sadler and Miss Rowley. It is a pleasure that I have not thus far had except by correspondence. However, I do keep studying the Urantia Book which I consider in itself a remarkable phenomenon. The author (or authors) of the book have not hesitated to "stick their necks out" in so many areas of human knowledge that a critical analysis of the book should eventually supply a verdict

It seems to me that, if I were God, this is the sort of book which I would want to supply my human children on such a benighted and remote speck of dust as the earth. Yet, the best and highest service which can be rendered this book is a strictly objective and merciless critical analysis thereof.

As I read what it has to say about cosmology, cosmogeny, geology, chronology, biology, anthropology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, nuclear physics, etc. etc., I find myself wishing that I had considerably more competence in all of these fields. But I know that I had better stick to my own field of competence which happens to be Biblical studies. In passing, I note a few statements outside of my field of competence which I am inclined to challenge. On page 477, for instance, is this statement: "There are just 100 distinguishable atomic materializations of space-energy in a dual universe; that is the maximum possible organization of matter in Nebodon." This seems to me to say that only 100 chemical elements are possible. But I can quote several authorities to the effect that at least 103 elements have been identified and named.

However, returning to the field of Biblical studies, I make the following observations:

- (1) Page 2074. The teacher of Clement of Alexandria and the founder of the famous Catechetical School of that city was "Pantaenus" not "Poutaenus".
(This may be merely a typographical error.)
- (2) Page 1557. Philip the Apostle is identified with Philip the Evangelist (or Deacon) who is said to have gone on the mission to Samaria in Acts 8:5.
- (3) Pages 2057-60. The bestowing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is represented as occurring of the

same day as the ascension and 40 days after the crucifixion. Now this is an obvious error as the very word "Pentecost" means 50 and was supposed to be a week of weeks after the Passover.

- (4) Page 542. A quotation from the New Testament Book of Hebrews is attributed to Paul. This is amazing in view of the generally sophisticated and critical attitude toward the authorship of most of the books of the Bible. (E.G. pp. 1341-2)
- (5) Page 1559. Nathaniel's father is said to be Bartholemew. But Bartholemew is listed by the synoptic writers among the Twelve. It is a patronymic meaning "The Son of Tholmai". Thus it is logical to suppose that Nathaniel of John's Gospel is identical with Bartholemew of the synoptics, and that his father's name was Tholmai.
- (6) Page 1362. The synagogue teacher is spoken of as the "chazan." The Hebrew (Aramaic) for this officer is חזן which would be more correctly transliterated "chazzan" (with a double z).
- (7) Page 1565 (near bottom) "Far to the east they could discern the Jordan valley and, far beyond, the rocky hills of Moab." But the rocky hills of Moab were not east of Nazareth but east of the Dead Sea.
- (8) Page 1643. "Early on the morning of Tuesday, March 30, Jesus and the apostolic party started on their journey to Jerusalem for the Passover." But Hastings Bible Dictionary, Vol. I, p. 411 gives a table which shows that the latest possible date for the Passover in A.D. 28 was Tuesday, March 30 (beginning with sunset the previous day, Mon., March 29). Thus Jesus and His apostles are represented as setting out for Jerusalem and the Passover on the latest possible date for the Passover to begin. They arrived at Bethany on April 2, three days later. By this time the ceremonies of the Passover Feast and the first-fruits of the Barley harvest "waved" before the Lord would have been completed. True, the Feast of Unleavened Bread would go on for another three or four days, but it seems strange that they would deliberately be so late in arriving.

It is only fair to note that the Urantia Book does not claim to be infallible (p. 1008). It is also fair to note that on the other side of the ledger are literally thousands of amazingly accurate details harmonizing perfectly with known geographical and chronological facts. For instance, the U.S. states in opposition to a tremendous weight of tradition that Jesus did not die on Passover Day, but on the day preceding, that, in 30 A.D., Passover began at Sunset on Friday, April 7 and continued until sunset, Saturday, April 8. This agrees with the point-of-view of John's Gospel but disagrees with the synoptics. Moreover, astronomy bears witness that the first visibility of the preceding new moon was at sunset on Friday, March 24. This would then be the beginning of Nisan 1 in the Jewish calendar. This would bring Nisan 14, the "Preparation for the Passover," to the day beginning sunset April 6 (Thurs.) and Nisan 15, the Passover itself to the day beginning at sunset ~~on~~ Friday, April 7, continuing through Saturday. This agrees with the Gospel of John and the Urantia Book.

3.

No doubt many more discrepancies will be discovered in the Urantia Book. About all that this will prove is that even "midway creatures" can make mistakes. But, if for each mistake we are able to spot, we are enriched by 1,000 thrilling new facts, then we have a spiritual gold mine before us in the Urantia Book, and the ore we dig out assays at about 999/1,000. We do well not to accept it blindly, but it merits a considerable measure of our confidence.

Mrs. Adams joins me in extending our best wishes to you and your wife. We have now completed eight years in this difficult inner city church. During this period we have had the pleasure of taking into the church 283 new members. The turnover has been so great that we only have 282 members as of now. Yet we have prospered by the grace of God, and I now have a full-time assistant with an Italian name (Rev. Richard Fagetti) who I think is well-qualified to carry on.

If you know of anyone in New Jersey who would like an experienced Minister of Visitation, I wish you would let me know, -- perhaps even speak a good word for me. I think I could do a good job for some one in helping to build up their membership.

Most cordially yours,

Benjamin N. Adams

Adams' letter two – Copy to Dr. Sadler 3/9/1959
Page three.

March 17, 1959

Rev. Benjamin N. Adams
124 Geneva Way
San Francisco 12, California

My dear Rev. Adams:

I was very happy to get your letter of March 9, and I think this is the first really valid criticism I have ever had from a minister as concerns the Urantia Book. I have gotten hold of several the last year, but it was evident that the critics had never even superficially read the Urantia Book.

If minor discrepancies were to be found in the Urantia Book I have always suspected that they would probably be found in Part IV because that is the part of the Book that was prepared by the midwayers. The midwayers' mind level is but a trifle above that of the human mind.

My own preoccupation with the Urantia Book has been along two lines. First, I was concerned as to whether or not this was some fraudulent psychic phenomena or possibly a case of subconscious dissociation on the part of the subject such as I was familiar with in the fields of automatic writing, trance mediums, etc. I was the last of my family to accept the Urantia Papers. I finally decided that the whole thing was beyond my ability to understand.

My next concern had to do with the consistency of the Papers. I finally decided that a fraud could not go on the witness stand for twenty-five years, to be examined and cross-examined by 250, and to give more than a million words of testimony and never once contradict himself. I decided that this subject must be telling the truth in order to discuss such a wide range of topics and not once slip into a contradiction.

You ask about others who have critically examined the Urantia Book. From a standpoint of general science I think the studies of the late Sir Hubert Wilkins were perhaps the most extended and exhaustive. For more than twenty years he periodically spent time in Chicago going over the Papers. He would work weeks at a time, ten hours a day, and his final conclusion was that the Papers were consistent with the known facts of modern science.

Since the Book was published, a young physicist in Philadelphia has been a very careful student of the physics of the Urantia Papers. About a year ago he wrote a paper, with many diagrams, for the Gravitational Society, in which he advocated that the cosmology of the Urantia Book was the only one that was possible from the gravitational standpoint.

I was very interested in your criticism as proposed in your letter to Dr. Douglass. I would offer the following comments on these criticisms:

1. I think the spelling of the name of the teacher in Alexandria is undoubtedly an error in transcribing the manuscript into typewriting. An "an" was undoubtedly transcribed as an "cu". I remember when we were sometimes in doubt as to whether a letter was an "n" or a "u" in the manuscript. Of course, we who were preparing this matter, did not know the name of this teacher so could have easily made this mistake.
2. As far as I could detect, there is only one Philip recognized in the Urantia Book. I note what you say in this matter.
3. Now as to the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth—the possible discrepancy between the end of one Paper and the beginning of another we all noted it one time and discussed it further when the Book was going to press. You should remember that the midwayers prepared a narrative that was many times larger than was finally given us as Part IV. of the Urantia Book. It may be that in deletion some difficulties were encountered. Our understanding is that the prayer meeting which Peter conducts at the close of one Paper is not the same as that at the opening of the next Paper. The one ended at the Day of Ascension, the other opened up the Day of Pentecost.
4. About Paul and Hebrews — of course, we all puzzled about that the same as you, and it occurs two or three times in the Papers. We have finally come to the conclusion that it was of composite authorship and the Apostle Paul had something to do with the presentation.
5. About Nathaniel's father I can offer no suggestions except that I know that the manuscript was very clear that it was Bartholomew.

3.

6. About the spelling of "chazen". Our mandate forbade us in any way to alter the text of the manuscript, but gave us jurisdiction over capitalization, spelling, and punctuation. We were told to select our authority and stick to it. Evidently, the authority we chose spelled "chazen" with one z.
7. Your notation about Ucah is a puzzler to me. We have just looked in the atlas, and, of course, you are right. I have no explanation for this matter—either a mistake of the midwayers or a mistake in copying. I cannot say, but evidently you are right in this matter.
8. The intricacies of Jesus' crucifixion and the Day of the Passover I am not competent to appraise. In fact, I was not aware that there was any difference in the Gospel of John and the Synoptics, but I am glad that you are inclined to agree with the Urantia Book.

I was indeed cheered to get such an encouraging estimate of the worth of the Book from one who had made such a careful study of it.

I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy of an outline which I gave to a dozen ministers who came to meet with me about six months ago. I told them that while I was unable to explain to them about how we had got the Book I was able to explain to them how we had not got the Book.

I do hope that we will have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Adams one of these days. I am sure, if you have the occasion to come back East, you will not fail to let us have a visit with you.

With all best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

William S. Sadler

WSS/ar

JAMES C. MILLS Ph.D.
2362 THOMPSON BRIDGE
ROAD, N.E.
APT. A-10
GAINESVILLE, GA 30601.

March 5, 1991

Dear Ken and Betty:

I apologize for the overlong delay in response to your letter of November 20, '90. While moving, I severely twisted my back. There was no improvement after four months, so a lumbar X-Ray was taken indicated a healing fracture. This has improved over three months to the point of where I could submit to prostate surgery and that was done on February 1. Yesterday I returned to normal functioning. I feel better than I have in several years and am enjoying getting back to work.

About all the help I can give you on any changes in the text of The URANTIA Book including punctuation, "typos", changes in digits, and textural changes are those of my own experience.

As I told you, prior to publication, Forum members, engaged in reading the first proof sheets made from the original metallic plates, were constantly seeking primarily for typographical errors including punctuation, errors of grammar, syntax, or any other errors which could occur in the process of the transference of a text from manuscript through the linotype procedure into metal printing plates. Apparently, the most potent source of error would lie at the point of the linotype operator. Dealing with a complicated text did not simplify matters, at least in my opinion. It is my belief that some of the "typos" were carried over into the first printing.

I had only one experience with a textual change being made between printings. I told you about this during your visit in Pensacola. This was due to the diligence of a high school science teacher who had a B.S. in science and had read in a scientific journal that a specific figure given in The Urantia Book expressing the relationship between the mass of the nucleus and the planetary electron in the hydrogen atom had changed by one digit. He was able to persuade the people at 533 to change it in the second printing. At that time I had moved to Wisconsin and the chap instituting the change had followed me as president of the Brotherhood. Quite by accident, the change was pointed out to me by a young woman student who was incensed at obvious tampering with what she firmly and correctly believed should be left alone by human hands. I raised quite a ruckus about the matter and it was returned to its original status in the very next printing. Since that move, with the exception of 1973-1975, I have not resided in Chicago and have not been informed of any other apparent discrepancies between printings until your letter of Nov.20. I am taking up this matter with the Foundation immediately.

You have asked the exactly correct question about the original type setting which appears to be involved in some of these events. The original printing plates for the U.B. were made by the old linotype-mold-casting technique. In the twelve year interval between the first and second printings new photographic techniques and higher speed presses had rendered the original plates obsolete and new plates had to be produced. As the original plates were

planned to yield one million impressions, this was quite a blow. It is quite possible, despite what was thought to be close supervision, that errors were introduced at this point. You know from your own writing experience how difficult a proof reading task is involved in a text of over one million words. It looks like we need to carefully proof read the present printing against the first printing. In my opinion, there can be only one edition of the U.B., the first.

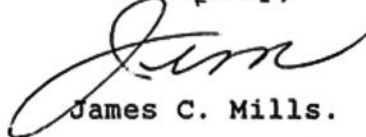
I am very glad to receive your comments and appreciate your confidence very much.

In regard to comments about the introduction and summary I find no fault with them.

I would suggest that you give some thought toward some emphasis on the fact that we all can see a new work only through the eyes of our own partial knowledge and experience; our world view or hypothesis, our weltanschauung. This immediately forces us to see a new work through dark glasses. We also place far too much significance on the works of others talking about the same thing, particularly in the areas of philosophy and religion about which A.N. Whitehead quipped: "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato." Jesus was more serious than we realize when he said: "you must become as little children." This is particularly true of our approach to the U.B. The fact that it continually reiterates, 'religion is a purely human experience of experiencing a relationship with God' should promptly eliminate our tendency to compare the U.B. with known theological thought except as the latter may provide some means to insight but never explanation. At a recent group meeting in Atlanta, one of the members brought out a bible to compare with the U.B. I interrupted to ask: "do you compare The URANTIA Book to the bible or the bible to The URANTIA Book or do you see each as an independent work discussing at times the same events?" I see science with a different viewpoint. My own early training in Chem. and Physics showed me that science is an ongoing process and to dogmatize it at any point is to fossilize at that point.

Now that I am beginning to return to the things that I wish to do, I will honestly try to be a better correspondent. Please give my best wishes to that gal from your area who wrote me. I have not answered her and can't remember her name. It will be a great pleasure to hear from both of you again. Eunice sends her best to you. She's out pushing cards this morning.

Sincerely,



James C. Mills.

Page two of the Mills letter. He states that he has no knowledge of changes made to the text of The Urantia Book other than one regarding the relative mass of the atom to the electron, which he thought was changed back at his insistence. It was not. Mills also believed the text was completely reset for the second printing. It was not.



URANTIA FOUNDATION
533 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60614

June 13, 1988

Mr. J.J. Johnson
44-392 Olena St., #4
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Dear Mr. Johnson:

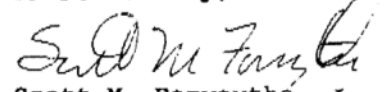
Thank you for your recent letter with attachments concerning your correspondence with Christy regarding various matters you raised about the text of The URANTIA Book, particularly your concerns about the phrase "inhabited worlds" which appears on page 1319.

A copy of your exchange of correspondence with Christy over the matter of page 1319 will be shared with the Trustees. However, as you are well aware, Christy's relationship to the text of The URANTIA Book was unique. It should be appreciated that the correspondence between Christy and you was of a personal nature and should not be assumed to be the official position of the Board of Trustees. It is quite probable that the current Board of Trustees do not feel that they have the same relationship with the text of the book that was enjoyed by Christy. In other words, the Trustees may not feel they can exercise the same latitude that was available to Christy in these matters.

I can only assure you that this matter will be brought to the attention of the Foundation. I cannot give any assurance that there will be a formal response on this matter from the Board. For obvious reasons, a matter such as this is an issue of delicate and sensitive proportions, and the Board may not wish to expand the written record on the matter. It is possible that the only clear response to this matter will be to examine the phrase of concern in the 10th printing of the book.

It was good to see you and Geri at the General Conference last year. I get the impression through the grapevine that you and Geri's presence on Oahu has had a most positive influence on activity. Keep up the good work. The fields are vast but the laborers are all too few. Best wishes and warmest regards from everyone.

In Fellowship,


Scott M. Forsythe
Administrative Assistant

SMF:cl

Scott Forsythe letter to JJ Johnson 6/13/88 explaining that Christy had a "unique" relationship with The Urantia Book, and that the Board "may not wish to expand the written record on the matter." The Trustees did not make Christy's changes in the 10th printing.